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# SWORD TO LAFAYETTE

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# MY SWORD FOR LAFAYETTE

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"STEEL CLASHED UPON STEEL"

(PAGE 163)

# MY SWORD FOR LAFAYETTE

*Being the story of a great friendship: And of certain episodes in the wars waged for liberty, both in France and America by one who took no mean part therein*

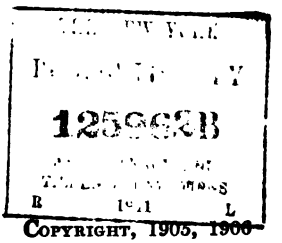
BY

MAX PEMBERTON

AUTHOR OF

"*Beatrice of Venice*," "*A Daughter of the States*,"
"*The Garden of Swords*"

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
1906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MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

HOMMAGE RECONNAISSANT

DE L'AUTEUR



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# FOREWORD

THIS is the tribute of Zaida Kay, the friend and sometime the companion of the Marquis de Lafayette, who, at the age of nineteen years, forsook his country and his family to embark his fortune and his life in the cause of the freedom and the liberty of a great people. But twenty-one years of age himself when he accompanied the American agents to Paris in the year 1776, Zaida Kay was present at Barren Hill and contributed not a little to General Lafayette's success upon that occasion. Thereafter, he returned to France, believing that he could be of some service to the Marquis, who had befriended him in a signal manner in America, and was then believed by the American people to be in some grave peril by reason of his principles and their practice in Paris. The story of his adventurous journeys is not the least satisfactory page in the life of a man of singularly attractive character and indomitable courage. Zaida Kay was first and foremost the friend of Lafayette; but he was also a sterling soldier, who never forgot a kindness nor willingly did any man an injury. His attempt to rescue the Marquis after his own

release from prison ended in failure, but not in ignominy. And it is well to know that fortune, often capricious, dealt justly with a man who did no evil that lived after him, and carried to his grave upon the banks of the Potomac the aftermath of that harvest his good deeds had reaped.

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## CHAPTER I

### IN WHICH ZAIDA KAY IS FOUND AT BORDEAUX

It is very well known to all the world that M. de Lafayette, when he would have gone over to the help of the American Colonies, was much beset by the opposition both of the Government and of his family. As it fell to me to be of some service to him at that time, and particularly when he quitted Paris in the year 1777, I can do no better than speak first of the event of his departure from France and of the dangers he evaded upon that occasion.

Now, the ship *La Victoire*, which was to carry us to America, had been lying awhile in the Spanish port at Pasages, while the Marquis himself, the better to deceive his enemies, set out upon a visit to England; and upon his return to Paris gave it out that he had abandoned his Quixotic notions and thought no more of them. Such a trick deceived few, his father-in-law, the Duc de Ayen, not being among the number; and it speedily became necessary either to put the project to the venture or to abandon it for all time. So it happened that he quitted Paris in the early days of April, and, determined upon gaining the ship, was ready, if need be, to sacrifice his fortune to that purpose.

I did not accompany the young Marquis from the capital; but, it having been arranged that I should return to America upon his ship, the third week of the month found me at Bordeaux; and I repaired at once to his hotel, and there discovered him in a state of great apprehension and some despondency. The ship, which he had bought with his own money, still lay at Pasages; but his father-in-law had sent the officers after him to Bayonne, and he knew that every road from the city was guarded. None the less, I discovered that his resolution was unshaken, and that the same ideas of humanity and freedom animated him here upon the threshold of his venture as had earned him the pity of the sycophants in the *salons* of Paris.

"I am going to America, let them do what they will," he would say, and then, his young, earnest face lighted up by a thought which gave it beauty, he would continue: "Each must do as his own conscience teaches. The happiness of your country is intimately related to the happiness of all humanity; she will become the worthy and safe asylum of virtue, of integrity, of tolerance, of equality, and of a peaceful liberty. If the least of us can further her aims, should he be discouraged by his friends, even though they call him mad?" he added, with a laugh.

I had heart enough for his sentiment; but with the officers upon the high-road waiting to clap him into a French prison, and his ship lying ready for us

in a Spanish port, and but half a day's grace to call our own, I was all for practice and none for philosophy and so I told him as civilly as a friend might do.

"Whatever they would do, Marquis," I said, "let it be our business to do it first. You have carriages and horses at your command. Is there any law which forbids us to make as good use of them in Bordeaux as we did in Paris? Take my advice and put it to the hazard. We shall get nothing but old wine in this town, and a man may have too much of that. Be up and off while the officers are still indoors looking for you."

He liked my impetuosity, which was a good enough foil to his own prudence; it was plain, nevertheless, that he was but half persuaded.

"I would most willingly obey you, friend Zaida," said he with a laugh, "but do you forget that M. de Mauroy drove with me to Bayonne no more than three days ago? Surely it is hazarding too much to believe that the people will not recognise me."

"Do you go in that fine dress with the King's gold lace upon your shoulders they will certainly recognise you," I admitted; "none the less, there are other ways and other clothes," I added, a little sharply, for his born dread of authority in fine feathers was little to the liking of an American. This he did not take amiss.

"Here is good friend Zaida Kay ready to make a courier of me," said he to M. de Mauroy.

"The very thing!" cried I, jumping up at the words. "Go as a courier you shall, while M. de Mauroy rides in the coach. A hundred guesses would not have done better for us, Marquis."

Well, we all stared at one another as men who have stumbled upon a great idea by accident. Perhaps we should have argued it this way and that, putting all the pros and all the cons; but the words were hardly spoken when the landlord came running in to tell us that the dragoons were at St. Jean de Luz, a little village upon the road beyond Bayonne, and that we had not an hour to lose. M. de Lafayette needed no other argument.

"I put myself in your hands," said he. "Let us go at once."

## CHAPTER II

### THE INN AT ST. JEAN DE LUZ

We drove out of Bordeaux without loss of time. M. de Mauroy sat upon the Marquis's left hand. I faced them and kept an eye upon the grooms who followed after with our horses. M. de Lafayette's preoccupation did not surprise me. If I wondered at all (and it was no hour for wonder) my astonishment expressed itself in a silent tribute to this exceptional man, who abandoned his family and his country that he might, by his example, defend those new principles of liberty and freedom whose considerations then animated so large a portion of the civilised world. This could provoke both amazement and pity. I remembered his child-wife—but eighteen years of age, and two years the mother of his little girl, Henriette. I recollected his fortune of six thousand pounds a year; the place and power awaiting him in Paris; the dolours which must attend his venture across the seas; the trifling achievement which could in any case be looked for. "You know not what you do," I thought. And yet was it for me, an American, to speak my thoughts aloud? Nay; I wished him "God speed" with all my heart, and asked nothing better than to be of service to him in the days to come.

Our journey to Bayonne proved tedious, but without event, except it were the hint of soldiers upon the road and of increased vigilance upon their part. We left that town upon the morning of the third day after, and were already three miles upon our way when we brought the carriage to a halt and began to prepare ourselves for the ordeal before us. An old man by the wayside, ready enough to tell us all he knew and more for a crown, gave us news of the dragoons and of the questions they had put to him. "There were six upon horses," said he, "and one that was a mighty fine gentleman. Your Excellencies will find them at St. Jean de Luz. Do they pass by again, I will make it known that you are seeking them." We thanked him for his tidings and bade him say, if any asked him, that M. de Lafayette and a party of gentlemen had driven out upon the road to Marseilles. At which he scratched his head and, laughing flatly at the Marquis, he cried, "I'll save your neck if I die for it, my brave boy." And be it added that this merry old rascal was within an ace of bringing us all to grief at St. Jean de Luz.

The Marquis was much perplexed when he heard that the dragoons had ridden on before us, but I hastened to point out to him that it was well for us they had done so.

"They will not look for you in a village inn," said I; "and if they halt anywhere, expect to find them at the frontier. All the town believes that we are rid-

ing to Marseilles. We do well to follow upon their heels and not to have them after us, Marquis. I am all for going ahead upon the horses and leaving M. de Mauroy here to play your part in the carriage. He has papers to defend himself, and may well hold them up long enough for us to make the ship. And if it be not to-day it will be never," said I, for I truly believed that any further delay would deliver him into the hands of his enemies.

"Would you clap friend Mauroy in the Bastile?" he asked, with a laugh.

"Aye, readily," said I, "if I could put you on the ship thereby."

"And I am to deck myself out in these clothes?"—he put it to me.

"Here and now, by the roadside," said I, "'twill be a tale for M. de Mauroy to tell in prison."

They both laughed at this, and we alighted from the carriage at a bend in the road where a little wood somewhat shielded us from observation; and there M. de Lafayette put on the clothes of a gentleman's servant, the same which he had carried out of Bordeaux with him. For myself, the habit of an American traveller was good enough for me; and the warning coming from the grooms that there were strangers upon the road behind us, we mounted our horses in some haste and put them to the gallop. Ahead of us now lay the hamlet of St. Jean de Luz, set high upon the cliffside. As we mounted from the lower road the

ocean wind caught us fairly and with such strength that we must duck our heads and clip the saddle with our legs to keep a seat at all.

"It will be a rough passage," said the Marquis as we went.

"If it is a passage at all, I shall count the day lucky," said I.

"There must be no mishap," said he; "I am set upon this, Mr. Kay, and no consideration of the consequences will turn me back. At the hazard, I rely upon your support in any circumstances we may have to face."

"You may count upon that all the time," said I, "though for that matter I am not sure that it is not a very foolish business, Marquis. You were better at Auvergne, as all the world has told you."

He answered, a little bitterly:

"The world is very old, Mr. Kay, and I am young. But it is the youth of the world which is going to save the people."

I left him with it. He was a man of precept, and would have spoken it even upon the scaffold, I believe. I reckoned that his faith in other channels would have made a priest of him, and his affection for my people bound me to him in bonds of steel. But this was no place to tell him so; for here we were clattering up to the stables of the inn at St. Jean de Luz, and there stood a sullen ostler ready for our horses and promising us good meat and drink within.

To judge by the looks of the place a man could lie as safe here from his enemies in Paris as though he were the master of an island in the South Seas; but I was ever on the side of prudence, and I held M. de Lafayette by the arm while I questioned the man and asked his news.

"We are to find apartments for his Excellency the Marquis de Lafayette, who is now upon the road from Bordeaux," said I; "he is a man not much given to company. If you have a full house, make it known to us and save our time and your labour. You will lose nothing by your honesty."

He was a tousled-headed rogue, and he looked at me askance with an odd pair of sea-green eyes, while he said:

"Aye, honesty is a good enough bed-fellow when your purse is full of crowns."

"His Excellency has crowns enough," said I, "for those that know how to serve him."

"Then I'm your man," said he, "and may my father die of the spotted fever if your lord does not lie alone in the house."

"You sorry liar," said I and I caught him by the throat and shook him until his teeth chattered in his head. For what should happen even as we talked but that one of the dragoons we had been fearing all along came out of the inn door a hundred paces away, and, crossing the road with scarce a glance in our direction, went straight into a house upon the

other side of the way; and there, I suppose, fell tooth and claw upon the meat some good wench had roasted for his delight.

"Ho, ho!" said I, "here is honesty with a pistol at his head—and by all your spotted ancestors," said I, "you shall know what's inside it if you lift a finger against us."

The rogue went white enough as I forced him back against the stable door; and I doubt not that my manner deceived even M. de Lafayette. But I made a sign to him over my shoulder; while to the shivering wretch in my grip I said:

"These men are asking after his Excellency."

"What's that to me? Am I to die for it?"

"They will question you by and by."

"Let them keep their hands from my throat and I'll answer them civilly."

"Saying that my lord rides to Toulouse."

"Where's honesty now?"

"Honesty is promising you a handful of crowns. Listen, booby. You have met his Excellency's courier, and he has told you that the place is Pasages."

"I'll say nothing about the pistol."

"Wiser not; and, hark ye, if you lie to us, God help you."

I showed him a purseful of crowns and bade him go into the stable with the horses which the dragoons had tethered there. Our own we led to a stall upon the farther side of the yard. The loft above it seemed

built on purpose to hide us; and had we been observed riding up to the inn, I made sure that the officers would already have questioned us. There were no windows upon our side of the house; and if the rascally ostler made any attempt to play us false, I had determined to shoot him down there and then. You may ask why we did not ride straight on to the frontier. I answer that we should then have been compelled to pass the inn door publicly—it lay some little way from the stable yard, and the risks of discovery had been greater. That the ostler believed us to be M. de Lafayette's couriers I was convinced; and in telling him the truth and offering him money I both ensured his silence concerning our presence at the inn and made a story for the dragoons which could not fail to mislead them.

"For," said I, "he will give the courier's account that it is the road to Pasages, and they, believing the courier to be a liar, will set out upon the road to Toulouse, and a merry journey I wish them."

And with this in my mind I followed the Marquis up the ladder and boldly entered the hay-loft at the top of it.

"It will do very well," said he.

And then he stopped short and the pair of us stood looking at each other with that silly air which overtakes a man when he discovers his own foolishness and it is too late to draw back.

## CHAPTER III

### PAULINE BEAUVALLET

"SHE's asleep," said the Marquis.

I peeped over his shoulder, as a man may do at a babe in a cot, and said I, "'Tis true enough!" The young lady lay fast asleep in the straw, and many is the rogue who would have waked her with a kiss.

"This is no servant of the inn," M. de Lafayette ventured in a whisper.

I replied, no louder, that she was evidently a person of quality; "but," said I, "her father's châteaux are in Spain."

"That must have been her pony in the box below," said he next.

I answered him that she had ridden to the place as we had done, and was up here in the hay-loft for the very same reason that had sent us there.

"She's afraid of the soldiers," said I, "and a wise little head to be that."

"If she wakes and discovers us here she will scream," the Marquis imagined. I differed from him altogether, and said so.

"The same good sense which brought her to the loft will give her the wit to ask a question first," said I.

"'SHE'S ASLEEP,' SAID THE MARQUIS"

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We were in the thick of an argument about it when my lady woke up for herself, and looking about her for a spell wildly enough, now at the Marquis, now at me, laughed openly in our faces and told us something which we knew already.

"You are M. de Lafayette," said she, and repeated emphatically, "Oh, yes, yes, M. de Lafayette, and the soldiers from Paris are after you."

He bowed in a manner that only a man born and bred to the gallantries of a French noble could imitate; and then he said:

"You have quick eyes, mademoiselle. I am M. de Lafayette, as you say, and the soldiers from Paris are after me."

"And you rode through Irun a week ago, in a carriage with M. de Mauroy. My father told me your name. 'That is the Marquis,' he said, 'and his ship is at Pasages. He wishes to go to America, but his friends prevent him.'"

"Your father is well informed, it appears. Am I not to have the honour of knowing his name?"

"My father is the Count of Beauvallet," she said, as though she had named one of the greatest in France, and not a poor wretch of an adventurer (as I knew the Count to be) without a crown in his pocket or a single good coat to his back. But I liked the child's devotion for all that, and so did M. de Lafayette.

"I am proud to know the Count's daughter,"

said he. "It will be another pleasure to be presented to her father." And then he bowed again as these Frenchmen do whenever the word gives them the half of a chance.

I perceived that his retort perplexed her. For the moment, perhaps, she had forgotten why she was in the hay-loft with us, and the somewhat undignified position we three stood in together. A more engaging, self-possessed, witty little woman all France had not shown me. I gave her sixteen years; and there was light enough in the place for me to tell you that her eyes were the blackest that ever man called blue at all.

"Oh," said she, thinking upon M. de Lafayette's words, "my father rode toward Bayonne at dawn to-day, and I have come to St. Jean de Luz to meet him. We are going home together, you know; he told me to be at the inn at twelve o'clock. If he does not come you cannot be presented to him, monsieur—unless you go to Irun with me," she added naïvely; and I do believe that she had the mind to flirt with the pair of us. The Marquis, however, was never a man to take overmuch notice of womankind; and he replied to her, gravely enough:

"The Count will surely return, since he knows that you are here, mademoiselle. I suppose that you do not care much for the company of soldiers? Are you not hiding from your father for that reason?"

She was about to respond when I heard a clattering of horsemen on the street without; and, venturing my head at the window of the loft, I perceived the travellers who had followed us from Bayonne. It did not occur to me, at the moment, that the old rascal of the roadside had told them all about us; and I was quite content to see them go ambling by to the inn door, where the dragoons had gathered.

"I thought it would have been Mauroy and our carriage," said I.

"And I thought it was my father," said mademoiselle.

"Is he often late upon the road?" the Marquis asked her.

"Never when I am to meet him at St. Jean de Luz," she exclaimed, and this betrayed the anxiety she began to suffer. "Dr. Laurens went with him," she continued, almost immediately, "and the Sieur Chaudry. He did not come and kiss me as he always has done. I spoke to him from the window and told him I should be at St. Jean. He did not seem to hear me. Do you think, messieurs, that anything has happened to my father?"

We would have laughed it off—who would not? For my part I had just made up a fine tale, and had settled myself beside her in the straw to tell it, when I caught a look upon M. de Lafayette's face I did not like to see there; and, springing up again, I heard the voices of dragoons in the yard at our very

feet. Instantly the three of us fell to dead silence; you could have heard a mouse in the straw.

"In a carriage on the road to Marseilles," cried out someone below. And a voice answered, "There's a red rat in a trap for you!"—meaning the Marquis, who had red hair, as all the world knows. I thought from this that the fellows were about to take horse and ride away back to Bayonne without more ado; but presently the first voice cried out again, "We must find the courier if we burn out the town." And at this the young lady pinched my hand in hers until her little finger-nails almost cut my flesh. M. de Lafayette, however, never moved a muscle of his face.

There he stood, as near to the prison-gate of his liberty as ever free man stood in this world, the yard below him full of the King's soldiers, their determination to arrest him avowed; and yet I'll swear he was no cooler when last I had seen him at his own dinner-table in Paris.

What was to be done? Should we go out and face the men or trust to clever tongues when they discovered us? To that Mlle. Beauvallet made answer. Without a word of warning, giving no sign of her purpose, she ran down the ladder from the loft, and the next we knew of it was a shout of welcome from someone below and the voice of the man who had spoken of the red rat. So, thus, a child in years but a woman in discretion risked her honour and her good

name for the sake of two strangers she had encountered by chance at the critical moment of their lives.

Her idea had been to hold the soldiers in talk. I believe that the officer in charge of them, a certain Captain Bernadotte, notorious for his gallantries toward women, and the uncle of that General Bernadotte who became famous in Napoleon's day—I believe that he was well acquainted with Pauline Beauvallet, and ready enough to find himself in her company. On her part, we could hear her telling him as fine a tale as ever a wild writer spun. She also had seen two men enter the stable and come out again into the yard and ride away, she declared; and Heaven forgive her for that, said I; though by the letter it was true enough. Her father, the Count, she added, must be even then in the village, and would have the news of the Bayonne road. What was more surprising was the way these fine-feathered gentlemen took it in and listened agape to her romance. In justice to them, be it said that they had no cause to suspect her honesty or to imagine that she had ever met M. de Lafayette in all her life.

"We must follow the men to Irun," cried the captain; and then, very meaningly, he leered at mademoiselle, and asked her to ride that far with him. "We shall pass the very door of your father's house," he put it to her; "what could be better than that, when there are so many dangers on the road?"

She, however, had years enough to colour up at his words, and she answered him with a pretty dignity I had not looked for in such a child:

"I shall wait for the Count, my father; he would not wish me to go," said she.

"But you cannot remain here alone," pleaded the captain, coming quite close to her, and beginning to wind one of her black curls about his fingers; "the Count would never forgive me if I went on without you."

"Then you will have to go unforgiven, monsieur," said she; and the dragoons laughed out at him upon that.

The situation was difficult enough, I must say; and I doubt if M. de Lafayette's fortunes ever stood in such jeopardy. Let any man ask himself if we could think only of ourselves while this brave girl risked name and reputation for our sakes and was put to open shame by the blackguardly dragoon in the stable yard. It needed no word from M. de Lafayette to tell me what he thought of it. Had it cost him his life he would have gone down to Mlle. Beauvallet's side, and I would have spoken no word to keep him back. For the matter of that, he stood within an ace of doing it; and he had so nearly discovered himself that another step would have showed him to the officers, when the sound of a carriage approaching upon the Bayonne road diverted both his attention and that of the fellow below, and in-

stantly we forgot mademoiselle and her embarrassment.

"It must be Mauroy," whispered the Marquis to me.

I had no doubt of it. Playing his part as we commanded him to do, M. de Mauroy followed after us in the carriage, and driving fast by the stables of the inn he perceived the dragoons and bade his coachman go straight on. The boldness of it tricked the captain and caught him in its meshes.

"It's Lafayette, for a thousand crowns," cried he; and then he roared to his men to bring out the horses, and there was such a hurrying to and fro, such a shouting of "Whoa!" "Get up!" and "Stand still there!" that a regiment might have been falling in. I thought, at the first, that the road would be cleared for us without more ado; but as I was pluming myself upon the circumstance the captain leaped into his saddle and bawled out to a couple of his men to keep watch at the stable gates. Then he went clattering down the road after the carriage, and mademoiselle below, making a sign to us to be still, brought out her pony and went after him.

"Evenly matched," said I to the Marquis when she had gone, "and not such fat birds either."

"Where's the girl gone, I wonder?"

"Oh, she's clever enough—don't be uneasy on her account. There's something in the wind, be sure of

it. And a fine lot of talk there will be when they catch Mauroy," said I, remembering our joke that he was to be clapped in the Bastile. M. de Lafayette, however, looked mighty serious, and I am sure that he began to understand how small was his chance of ever setting foot on the deck of his ship.

"He has good horses," he exclaimed presently, referring to Mauroy and the carriage, "but they will catch him before he has gone a mile. If we are to get out of this place we must lose no time, Mr. Kay. Those fellows at the gate do not look very formidable. Do you think we might venture it?"

"There is not a doubt of it," said I, "since it is evident that they have business of their own to attend to."

It really was remarkable, and yet not remarkable at all if you knew the secret of it. The dragoons set to watch the stable yard now loitered in the middle of the road gazing after their comrades who pursued the carriage. Presently they began to advance step by step in the direction of the inn door, as though some one were beckoning them. I perceived plainly that Mlle. Beauvallet was at the bottom of it, and losing no instant of the precious opportunity, I ran down the ladder and called out to the Marquis to follow me.

"She's worth her weight in gold," said I to him, as we led the horses out. "Don't you see that she's tricking them?"

But he was still thinking of the carriage.

"We shall have to pass the others if we are to make Pasages," said he.

"Then we'll go at a gallop," said I; and so we rode into the street.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BRAWL IN THE STREET

HALF the population of St. Jean de Luz gossiped in the street when we rode from the stable door. The girls had run out with mantillas about their pretty ears; the men smoked indifferently, as though a game were being played for them. All, however, were looking down the road after the soldiers, who had disappeared in a cloud of dust on their way to the Spanish frontier. As for the dragoons who had left their posts, I perceived them in earnest talk with mademoiselle under the very signboard of the inn. Had they looked round by any chance and called the people to their assistance, our hope of escape was gone for good and all. I had my heart in my mouth as we rode, and I wondered a hundred times why I had been mad enough to let the Marquis go on.

Now, little Mlle. Beauvallet saw us, for she had been wise enough to hold the men in talk with her back toward the flying dragoons; and it really was wonderful to see how cleverly she acted her part, bending down in earnest converse with them and telling, I do not doubt, some story of the Marquis which they would remember for many a year to come. We had perhaps a hundred yards to go to come up with her,

and this journey carried us by some of the villagers, who remarked our presence, not by a shout as you would have imagined, but by nudging each other and pointing and indicating plainly that they knew us, but would not speak. In this way, as much to my surprise as anything which ever happened to me, we found ourselves presently within fifteen paces of the inn door, and would have gone right on in safety but for the rogue of an ostler, who came running out without any warning and shouted tipsily, "Here goes honesty with his pocket full of crowns." Making a dash at my horse he caught the bridle and had me on the side-walk before a man could speak. At the same moment the dragoons turned their heads, and catching sight of us, one rushed upon M. de Lafayette; the other, shouting to the ostler to hold on, was about to pay me a similar compliment when my little lady upon her pony threw her bridle rein about his neck and had him triced up beside her in an instant, as neatly as any rogue that ever stood in Execution dock.

I swear it was as clever a notion as any clown at a theatre might have thought upon. There they went, pony and girl and dragoon, round and round like a top upon its peg, and not a man in all the village street could lift a hand against us for laughing. As for my own case, well, I did no more than pick the ostler up by the seat of his breeches and pitch him back to the place whence he had come—and that's

what I owe to my reputation in Philadelphia, thought I—for many had called me the strongest man in the city. When I had done with him and turned about to see how the Marquis was getting on, I found the dragoon holding like a cat to his stirrup-leather, while he, not willing to kill the man by a blow, could not, nevertheless, control the horse, which began to gallop in fright and to drag the fellow with mad heels along the road to Irun and the Spanish frontier. And assuredly there would have been some grave tale to tell, but for mademoiselle and her pony. Just as she held the first of the dragoons with a noose of her rein about his neck, so presently did she block the road to the Marquis and to the fellow at his stirrup-leather. The check brought the villagers to their senses and the man to his feet. While until this moment there had been nothing heard but laughter and the screams of women, now strong hands dragged the mad dragoon from his hold and thrust the pony aside. I cried to the Marquis to go on, and, believing that this was the last word opportunity had to say, I followed him at a gallop. We were out of the town and over the crazy bridge which crosses the river Nivelle while the people still argued as to which of the dragoons was the greater fool of the two.

"It will be the ship after all," said I, "and thanks to mademoiselle for the second time."

"I am doubting if we were in the right to leave her," said he.

I understood that he had in his mind some possible harm which might befall her from the village folks; but I pointed out to him that she must be well known in the place, and that from all I had heard in Paris the Count of Beauvallet was not a man to be trifled with.

"They spoke of him as a great fighter, a man whose sword had cut his fortune to bits. She is his only child," I said.

"I believe it to be so," M. de Lafayette rejoined. "He is a wild creature who leads a gipsy's life and pays dearly for it. When I return to France I will not forget his child," and this was very earnestly said.

In my turn, I told myself that the day would be very distant when I should forget the black-eyed little girl (for black they were when you did not catch the full light upon them) who had waited so patiently for her father in the stable yard at St. Jean de Luz. But I had been a wizard if I had foreseen that day of terror and of man's night which must bring me, after years, to her side again.

We were out upon the broad high-road to Irun when these words passed, and, although it was well enough to have the sea-salt in our nostrils and the splendid hills before us, it did not seem that our position had been very greatly improved by what we had done in the town. Somewhere between us and the frontier the dragoons were riding. They must have

come up with the carriage by this time, and would have discovered M. de Mauroy inside it. Our object was to pass them by, either boldly at a gallop or by stratagem. Nor, in spite of all the light words about it, could we forget that our comrade might suffer something upon our account; and, failing to find M. de Lafayette in the carriage, the soldiers might have carried Mauroy off as a prisoner. This put us to no little anxiety, and we began to ride warily, asking each other at intervals: "Do you see them? Is that the carriage? Who comes yonder?" and such-like questions natural to the circumstances. We were a good mile from St. Jean de Luz when we got any news, and then it came from the last person I had looked to find there—M. de Mauroy himself, sitting by the roadside, and laughing so heartily that minutes passed before he could speak to us.

"Well," said the Marquis a little sharply, "and where is the carriage, Mauroy?"

"Half-way to Irun," cried he, with his hands upon his sides; "and the curate of Sarlie inside of it."

"What!" exclaimed I. "You gave them the slip, then?"

"I met the curate at the bridge," he said, speaking quickly, lest he should laugh away his senses; "he was going my road, and I offered him a lift. When he got in I got out and told the boys to drive like the wind for Irun. And that's the last I know of it," said he.

"Then the red-legs passed you by?" I asked.

"At the gallop," said he, bursting out again; and so silly was it to see him convulsed at his own tale, and the Marquis as grave as an Archbishop, that I came near to falling out with the pair of them.

"It's much good we are doing ourselves," said I, "chattering on a roadside when every minute is precious. If we stop here long enough, the ship will have weighed. And we are to have company, it appears. Who would this be now, and why is he saluting us?"

A man had ridden up while we talked—an honest-looking fellow with black hair that would just be catching a glimmer of the grey; in dress neither a soldier nor a civilian, but betwixt and between the two; forty years of age, I should say, and as well mounted as any I had seen this side of Paris. His salute, I noticed, had been intended for M. le Marquis. I perceived instantly that they were well known to each other.

"Le Brun," cried M. de Lafayette, with pleasure at the recognition.

The man replied wisely by telling us his news without delay.

"The carriage is at the Château Beauvallet," he said. "I heard that you were on the road, and told them a tale. If you press on you may yet do it. The woods will give you cover."

"Are you speaking of Mlle. Pauline's home?" I asked him. But, of course, it could have been no

other. Destiny willed it that for the third time in one day the name of Beauvallet should be our salvation.

"I would have said so yesterday," the man replied; "but Heaven knows now."

"Then something has happened, Le Brun?" the Marquis exclaimed.

"Her father, the Count, was killed in a duel with Armand de Sevigny this very morning."

A dead silence fell upon us. For a moment our own purpose, its great meaning, and the hazard of our own situation were forgotten in the memory of this brave girl and the sorrow which awaited her. I was the first to speak.

"Heaven help her," said I; "and what will she do, think you?"

"I shall do my best," Le Brun said quietly. "There is still employment to be had for those who have a skin to sell. Hasten on while you may, Marquis. They are searching the château, but they won't lose any time, believe me. My horse is at the disposal of this gentleman here. He can leave him at the inn at Pasages, and I will send for him to-morrow."

He dismounted upon the word, and M. de Mauroy took his place. It was no time to dawdle with excuses Such thanks as we had to express to this silent, swift-thinking man the Marquis uttered.

"It's a long way from Irun to Metz," he said, "and little did I think, Le Brun, that when next we

met I should be upon my way to America and you at the Spanish frontier. Well, such is fortune; may it bring you recompense! And God bless you," said he, "for any kindness you may show to the child."

"And God keep you out of King George's way," was the quiet retort of this singular man. They parted upon that, and without another word we put our horses to the canter and faced the crisis.

The dragoons were at the Château Beauvallet! Count Maurice was dead! Little Pauline waited for him at St. Jean de Luz! We, with our eyes upon the great ocean, were at the mercy of any hazard which chose to betray us to the soldiers. Let them have a sentry posted at the gate of the château, and the good ship *La Victoire* would sail without its master. These things were in our minds as we approached the dead Count's house and perceived its white pinnacles rising above the woods and the stately trees about it. Was it win or lose for us—the Bastile, perhaps, or the waters of our freedom? In five minutes we should know; in five minutes the tale would be told. I shaded my eyes with my hand as the critical moment drew near, and peered down the road. Aye, truly, a man stood at the gate of the chateau. You could see him plainly enough—but he was no soldier.

"It's the curate," cried M. de Lafayette presently.

"And, by all that's holy, they've robbed him of his clothes," said M. de Mauroy.

Well, we went by him at the gallop—a thin, wan

man, who implored us as we passed to lend him a cloak for charity's sake. His request I could not answer for laughing, nor dare we lose one of the precious moments. The dragoons were behind us now, and we could hear their wild shouts as they discovered that the quarry had escaped them.

"America, by Heaven!" cried I.

The Marquis did not speak. His eyes were dim as they gazed upon that great ocean which lay between him and the land of freedom in whose cause he had been willing to sacrifice all that men hold dear.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIFTH WEEK

It has been my lot to cross the great Atlantic Ocean on five occasions, but I have never known a voyage which gave me more concern than the one which carried the Marquis de Lafayette to General Washington's camp in that memorable year of 1777.

We had escaped the dragoons at St. Jean de Luz, as I have shown you; the Spanish officers at the frontier were well disposed toward us, and we made the ship *La Victoire* at a moment when her captain had abandoned all hope of seeing us. Once on board, we found our friends from Paris, the Baron de Kalb, Colonels Delesser and Valfort, and younger officers, among whom I would name the brave Dutchman, de Bedaulx, who saved the ship by his courage when the captain would have played us false. Such a great strapping pirate of a man I have never known; and I do truly believe that a half of a chance would have seen him afloat in a ship of his own with the black flag flying at the mizzen.

An anxious company and a crazy ship and a cause which would have appeared to be at the very ebb of its fortunes—a man does not make over gay upon these. When we sailed away from the Spanish shores and turned our eyes wistfully to the great West, be

sure no gay chantey went with us, but the close talk and earnest words of men who are face to face with the chief business of their lives. The Dutchman, Bedaulx, provided what merriment we got. He was all aboard upon the deck by day, and by night a poor sleeper; trailing a great cutlass from his girth and roaring out oaths like a pirate king. When we fell across the ugly business in the fifth week of the voyage, it was Bedaulx who brought the Marquis to America and kept us out of a West Indian port, as you shall presently hear.

I say this happened on the Sunday of the fifth week. The Marquis was still too unwell to leave his cabin overmuch; the rest of us walked the deck almost day and night, fearful of English privateers and island pirates of all nations. As Bedaulx wisely said, we were in a way no better off than outlaws nor entitled to any greater consideration. The English would sink us on sight; the privateers of both nations would help themselves to our goods; the pirates would put out a plank willingly enough for the lot of us. Every sail upon the horizon brought our hearts into our mouths. We altered our course more than once because a star shone low down upon the sky-line. It was just the toss of a coin, as Bedaulx never forgot to remind me whenever we walked the quarter-deck together.

"Lafayette will never be taken," he would say; "it's promise to him. This ship and all aboard are

going to glory first. I've made my plans, friend Zaida, and I count upon you. We'll have a torch to the magazine and a psalm afterwards. You won't quarrel with that, eh, Master Prudence? You have the right stuff in you, or I don't know a man when I see him."

They all learned to call me "friend Zaida" aboard the ship, and many spoke of my prudence. Perhaps I had learned habits of gravity from a good Puritan stock that sailed away from Norfolk in the *Mayflower* before a State in America was more than a strange name to them. However it might have been, laugh or cry, I cared not at all, if I could be of service to M. de Lafayette.

For, remember, here was the son of one of the greatest houses in France, lying in a frouzy cabin upon a crazy ship, sick to desperation, heavy at heart and woebegone—his child-wife more than a thousand miles away from him—a bitter war before him, and not knowing whether he would ever see his own country again.

As we came to learn afterwards, while this was his portion, great folks in Paris were crying over his heroism, the *salons* clapping their hands, and even the court afraid to lift a finger against him. A few called him mad, that's true, but they looked foolish enough before the words had been long spoken. The better part of the nation applauded him already for of such stuff the nation's heroes had been made. And

I shall say it now and once for all, that never have I known a man who gave his heart more wholly to a cause which had no claim upon him or one who would so willingly have suffered for his faith.

But I was telling you of that Sunday in the fifth week when, after watching weary days for King George's ships and weary nights for all manner of phantom pirates that never came near us, I was called up by Bedaulx at dawn and asked by him what I made of a strange sail upon our starboard bow. The weather had turned easy; a light breeze from the east by north just filled our sails. We rolled lazily upon a kindly swell, and being a miserable sea-boat, caught plenty of whitecaps with our monstrous bows. When I had clambered up the companion, I found a little group of the ship's company, with one or two of the Frenchmen, all peering over the starboard bow at white sails upon a clear horizon; and they seemed confident that there stood a King's ship, and that we should know more of her presently. The Marquis, however, they had not waked; and I, for one, spoke against them doing so.

"She's as likely to be American as English," said I. "There were privateers from Charleston enough when I shipped for France, and more have been built since that day. If you are going about for every yard of white canvas on the sky-line," said I, "why, then, it had been better if the dragoons had clapped us all in the prison at Paris."

Bedaulx, the Dutchman, took the words up and swore by Heaven and below it that we should hold the course though the Great Mogul sailed the ship and a thousand Tartars were with him, from which it would appear that he had little learning from his school—and, indeed, I have found these Dutchmen but poor hands at their books.

"Yon's no Great Mogul on these seas," said I. "As likely as not she's as honest a ship as ever sailed out of New York Bay. Let the captain speak up. It's time we heard a word from him."

Now, the captain of our ship was a crafty man, with a cargo of his own below hatches that he had the mind to carry to the West Indies. M. de Lafayette believed in the fellow, but both Bedaulx and myself had our doubts about him, and there were days when we questioned his intention to carry us to America at all. On this particular morning, when it was a case of holding our course or going about again to steer clear of the strange sail, that mongrel of a man cried out at once for safety. "And," asked he, "would you forget what I have aboard?"—meaning, of course, the Marquis and the officers. Bedaulx was down upon him like a cannon-ball.

"Aye," says he, "ye have the hold full of bales, that's what ye have aboard, captain. And I'll tell you what, moreover," says he; "ye've this aboard as well as twenty in the same shape when we have the mind to draw them."

The captain turned as pale as a sheet at these words, for the Dutchman whipped out a great sabre and hacked a piece off the bulwarks as big as a man's thumb. The rest of us, fearing some outburst, closed round about our comrade; while the crew gathered all together amidships and seemed to wait for the captain to make some signal to them.

"Sir," said he to Bedaulx, when he had a little recovered from his surprise, "the law would justify me if I put you in irons for this."

We laughed outright at the fellow's impudence—none louder than Bedaulx.

"Oh!" cried he, "I've a great love for the law, and so have my honourable friends. Let the French King try me for hanging the louse of a man who is afraid of his own shadow, and no sheep shall go to the shearing more willingly."

And then, advancing step by step upon the officer, he cried as fierce as a Barbary pirate:

"Our port's in South Carolina, captain, and what we have aboard is a round dozen of honest men who will see that under Providence we make it. Put your airs in your pocket, my man, and attend to the business of the ship, for, by the coat upon my back, I'll cut you in two if you so much as think a treachery."

Well, there they stood facing each other, upon the one side an honest dog not afraid to bark; upon the other a snarling cur willing enough to snap if he had the half of a chance. What would have come of

it—whether an unseemly brawl between the crew and the soldiers or something more serious, which we should have regretted afterwards—I am not able to tell you; for a cry came over the sea to us in the very thick of it, and turning our heads we perceived the strange ship and understood in a twinkling both her purpose and our danger. She was a pirate sloop, flying the black flag as bold as brass, and occupied at that very moment in sending defenceless men to their death out there in the waste of the lonely ocean.

To say that this discovery astonished us would be by no means to convey a true sense of our dismay and perplexity. Our own petty quarrels were forgotten in a flash, and, awestruck and silent, we crowded to the bulwarks to watch that fearsome spectacle. If the Atlantic Ocean had written the story many times since brave ships sailed upon her waters, no man on the decks of *La Victoire* had beheld such a scene with his own eyes or could name it as within his experience. There, upon the gentle swell, a great ship rolled lazily in the trough of the sea. A hundred yards away from her stood the pirate, her sails close-hauled and her black flag fluttering bravely. Between the two a long-boat passed twice without resting, but the cry had come from the stricken ship's deck—the cry of a helpless lad whom the wolves were driving into the sea. Not by a plank, as the common story goes, but through a gap in the bulwarks amidships the villains pushed and dragged

the poor creature to his death. My glass showed me the bright steel of their cutlasses; they had not bandaged the eyes of their victim, but half lifting him, some beating him with the flat of their blades, some thrusting at him cruelly with their knives, they sent him headlong over the side.

Now, the spell of this foul deed worked a cruel fascination upon us all, and we did not move from our places for many minutes. Captain Bedaulx came first to his senses, and when I turned about at his words such a row of ghastly faces I have never seen nor would see again. Not want of courage, be sure of it, was that which troubled my comrades. They were as brave a company as I have sailed with; but they knew, as I knew, that we were utterly defenceless against the pirates; that our cannon aboard would not stand the firing; that the ship itself was rotten to the core; and that we had as good a chance of defeating the rogues as of meeting the great Lord Howe's ships and sinking them. This put them sorely to doubt. If we stood by, our turn would come next. If we launched a boat, she would carry her crew to the same death those poor fellows yonder were dying. We were the servants of a great cause; our duty, it might have been said, lay over yonder upon the great Western Continent; we owed it to M. de Lafayette to act with prudence and circumspection. For my part, I said plainly that if the Marquis wished us to venture to the help of those poor

creatures I would be the first into the boat. But I did not quarrel with the Dutchman for his haste, and when he shouted, "Gentlemen, there are women on board that ship!" I shut my lips and did not speak another word.

We had two boats aboard *La Victoire,* one a cutter and the other that which seamen call a long-boat. But they had been so securely made fast upon our decks that even the willing hands which now went out to the work could not readily unship them. I would have given my little fortune to have been aboard an American—aye, or an English—vessel at that moment; for what with horrid cries from the drowning men, the uncertainty of our own position, and the rage and anger at our hearts, it seemed to me that hours and not minutes passed before we had the cutter launched and could number a crew to man her.

To the credit of the company be it said that not a man stood back. The willing fellows almost fought with one another to be first aboard; and when all was ready their impatience to be cast off did a man's eyes good to see. Let this go to their credit, although they struck no blow against the pirate. They were not a hundred paces away from us when the captain roared out that the unknown ship was sinking. They were still holding their course when a voice behind me cried, "Those are English frigates!" Turning about, I found the Marquis at my side.

"What is it, Mr. Kay?" he asked. "What has happened?"

"That flag should tell you, Marquis," I said. "Yonder's one of the creek pirates, and that ship is their prey."

"But those others, Mr. Kay?"

"I had not seen them," I said, all excitement enough. "They are English ships, I do believe."

Swift changes come to us readily enough when we are abroad in search of fortune. But that change in the ocean picture, as I viewed it from the deck of *La Victoire* has had no companion within my experience. In a twinkling the positions were reversed. The great ship, hit badly by the pirate's gunners, settled without warning and sank by the bow, a horrid cry going up from her decks, and honest men and villains alike engulfed as she disappeared. The pirate sloop let go her sheets at the same instant, and, without a thought of the hands she left behind, raced at her best speed toward the south. That which had been a deserted horizon showed us the spreading sails and black hulls of two of King George's frigates. Our own boat held on to the help of the drowning people, ignorant that a new danger had come upon us. M. de Lafayette busied himself with the captain, and refused to have the signal made which would have recalled the cutter to us.

"No, no," he said; "it is but common humanity."

"It will be more than common humanity when the frigates come up with us," said I.

"We must do our duty," he rejoined; and his face flushed and I knew how greatly the anxieties of that hour and all that he suffered were telling upon him. But I did not reply to him, and when he had watched the cutter a little while he turned to me and asked:

"Why are you not in the boat with the others, Mr. Kay?"

"Oh," said I, "perhaps I was afraid."

And then he shook his head, and laying both his hands upon my shoulders he exclaimed, with more warmth than I ever remember him to have used:

"You stayed to be with me. It was that, Zaida Kay?"

In my turn I had nothing to tell him at all, except to speak of my love toward him, which, Heaven knows, has always been a precious thing to me.

## CHAPTER VI

### HONOR GRIMSHAW

If it had not been designed in God's good providence that M. de Lafayette should arrive safely in America, and that I should write down these memories of my friendship, the place of our misfortune certainly would have been the great Atlantic Ocean, and the instruments those two fine frigates which passed by us so closely that we could see the officers upon their quarter-decks.

Consider how little the English liked this voyage upon which we had embarked. Here was one of the truest aristocrats of France ready to give his life for that which he believed to be the justice of the American cause. The good wishes of his countrymen went with him, the hopes of my people awaited him. Could he have been secured and carried back to Paris, the French King had no alternative but to clap him in prison; for they would tell you that France was at peace with England, and that she owed it to her pacific intentions to display animosity toward M. de Lafayette. So enemies awaited him upon all sides, and none more bitter than those upon the decks of Lord Howe's ships, which were then abreast of us and

had but to lower a boat to take every man jack that sailed in *La Victoire*. I doubt if he had stood in greater peril even at St. Jean de Luz.

"This surely is the end of all our hopes," he said to me very quietly while we watched the fine ships together. I had no answer to give him, and I left it to the rascal of a captain, who was dying to be adone with America and safe upon a course to the Indies.

"My papers are all in order," says that dishonest fellow, bold enough now when help seemed near; "no King's ship has the right to meddle with me. I sail for the Indies, and the officers yonder will help me to make my port. You can count upon me, Marquis, but I will not lift a finger to save that dog of a Dutchman, though they hang him out of hand. Let us be plain with one another, for it is quite time we came to an understanding."

"Aye," said I, "and here's the Dutchman coming aboard to have an understanding upon his own account. Let us hear those brave words again, captain. You were not so loud before my friend Bedaulx just now, and, by all the powers, he's not so hard of hearing. Nay, speak up, for I can see that it will be a pretty argument."

He turned as pale as a sheet at my rejoinder, and the rest of us went to the gangway to watch the cutter row in. Quick as she had been in getting to the scene of the wreck, she had picked up but three of the

drowning people, and of these one was a woman, another the very meekest-looking pirate that I ever clapped my eyes upon, and the third so gaunt a fellow and yet so merry in his very misery that I laughed aloud at the sight of him.

"It's my old friend, Gad Grimshaw, and his sister, by all that's lucky," said I.

"Not Mr. Grimshaw of Philadelphia?" says M. de Lafayette, who had heard me talk of him.

"No other," said I; "such a man to laugh at that his own father won't have him in the house. He'll never drown, not he. The ocean choked over him. He was crossing the seas after me, no doubt of it."

"And he will have news from America for us."

I did not stop to tell him that a precious lot of good the news from America would do us with a brace of frigates upon our starboard quarter and a prison in France already swept out for us. Indeed, the surprise of this event made me like a man in a dream, and I went up to Gad, and, laying a hand upon his shoulder, I cried, "Well met, old friend!" just as though it had been in Philadelphia and not here upon the great bosom of the Atlantic Ocean. In turn he looked me up and down, first at the fine clothes and manner I had got in Paris, then at the officers in their brave gold lace, and says he, "Am I alive or dead? Is it Zadia Kay or his spirit?" and upon that, as the habit went, he moaned aloud and cried, "Oh,

Lord, let me not mistake this pirate man for Zadia Kay that was in righteousness." At which they all laughed out, and even the Marquis was amused.

"I congratulate you upon your good luck, Mr. Grimshaw," said M. de Lafayette. "We did not believe that many could live from the wreck. This lady, I understand, is your sister. She is welcome aboard, and we will do the best for her, although our own case is not much better."

"Let your Excellency take heart," rejoined Gad, with the longest face a man can pull. "You have no salt where the bread goes. As for my sister, 'tis she, I think, though much humbled by the water, which, Heaven knows, may be a blessing to us all. Come forward, Honor, and speak to his Excellency, if you've breath in your system, which I doubt."

Such a fresh, bright little body she was; but so white, and wet, and frightened that scarcely did I recognise Honor Grimshaw as she stood there before us trying to speak her gratitude, but too dreadfully alarmed to say a single word but to me alone.

"Oh, Zaida, Zaida!" she said, in tears; "and is it to America that your ship is carrying us?"

"Why, yes," said I; "if King George over yonder has nothing to say against it."

"And I shall see my home again?"

"Heaven grant it."

"Then never will I believe that Gad is not the greatest coward in all Philadelphia. Such talkings

of perils and omens and signs! Surely, Zaida, if he had not held the captain in talk an hour at dinner yesterday this great sorrow would never have come upon them at all. Oh, could they but bit his tongue!"

"Well," says I, "'tis lucky he has no French, and they'll not understand a word of it. Come down now and let the people below do what they can for you in the cabin. My poor little Honor, this is a day of meeting truly. But we'll laugh at it in America," I put in, for I would not have had her down at heart.

They found a cabin for her below, and I went up to the quarter-deck again. The two great frigates were still sailing almost abreast of us, their cutters searching for people from the wreck. I had no notion why they did not send a boat to board us, nor could I find a reason. It seemed the most marvellous thing alive that they should be within two hundred yards of the man they had been sent from England to hunt down, and yet so deceived by the situation that the truth of it never entered their heads. As for our rascally captain, he would have signalled to them willingly enough, I do believe, but for honest Bedaulx, who had his cutlass ready to his hand, and such a voice and manner that he would have scared King George himself.

"And lucky for you," he was saying to the captain when I came up—"and lucky for you that I learned

my flags upon the deck of an honest French ship. Do as I bid you, sir, or by the blue water below us I'll write my name on your ugly face. We are a French ship bound for the Barbadoes. The vessel they seek is yonder on the sky-line. Let your flags tell them that. And be sharp about it, sir, for I am not a patient man."

No need, truly, that he should have told the fellow that. I have seen Bedaulx in many moods, laughing under his bristling moustachios or crying like a girl for all the laughter he feigned; but never have I seen him so dangerous as in that hour of our misfortunes, when the frigates appeared to have us and our liberty to be a thing of yesterday. In the half of a minute, said I, the captain will be a dead man. And if that happens what then? Will his death save us from an English prison or worse? I could not believe that it would do so.

"He'll have his way," said I to the Marquis; "but what then? If they have eyes in their heads, they will spy us out with their glasses. You were wiser below, sir; for some upon those ships must surely know you."

He shook his head, but did not budge from his quarter-deck.

"I doubt that they know of our sailing," he rejoined, with his habitual composure. "Had they done so, their cutters would have boarded us by this time. Let Bedaulx have his way. A child's trick is better

than a man's sometimes. And they will be greedy after the pirates," he added, with a smile.

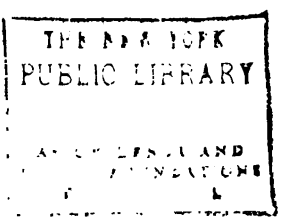
I shrugged my shoulders and held my tongue. Had our position been less hazardous, a man might have laughed at the scurvy captain, doling out his flags one by one like a miser his pennies. As for the others, the doubt and uncertainty of it made them appear almost indifferent to the issue. They were telling themselves, I suppose, that it was a game for children, to deceive children only; and they followed each flag, as it ran upward upon the line, with wondering eyes, their mouths agape and their faces stolid. When the signal had been made we all turned our gaze toward the frigates and waited awhile in as indescribable a state of anxiety as men have known upon a ship's deck. Would the child's trick deceive them? Would they send to search us? I did not dare to think about it. Little Honor Grimshaw, at my elbow, first spoke the good news.

"They are sailing away after the pirates, are they not, Zaida?" says she.

I turned smartly at the words and found her merry blue eyes looking straight into my own.

"If you say so, Honor, 'tis that, indeed," I cried, "and the first good word you ever spoke about King George," I went on, to tease her, for they had told me at Philadelphia that she was upon the point of marrying Captain Richmond, of the Fiftieth, when the war broke out.

" 'THE VESSEL THEY SEEK IS YONDER ON THE SKY-LINE' "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"You know that is not true, Zaida," she exclaimed, her cheeks flaming; "and if it were true, sir, what right have you to speak of it?"

"The right of one who has always wished the best to little Honor," said I flatly; "the right of a sour curmudgeon that none of your sex has a good word for. We'll talk of it ashore, little girl, for I do believe your prophecy is right and that yonder folk are away after their brothers the pirates. And that," said I, "is the best news, short of King George's running, that your pretty lips could bring me."

She laughed at my way of putting it; while all on the quarter-deck began to talk together excitedly and to tell their neighbours that Bedaulx indeed had saved us. Common prudence alone kept them from sending a rousing cheer after the ships. We watched the great spreading white sails as men watch a bird hovering, or the steps of a beast they are hunting. The tragedy of the sunken ship and of the poor souls lost therein could be remembered by none in an hour so momentous. The frigates were away to open the gates of America for us. The future should be the story of our country's liberty.

So at dinner we drank Bedaulx's health in bumpers of rare red wine; and little Honor being my neighbour, I remembered her words, that I had no right to speak of her welfare. If I held my tongue then as I had held it in brighter days, was it doubt of her or of myself, and had the black eyes of little Pauline

Beauvallet, sorrowing in that lonely house by St. Jean de Luz, nothing to say to it? I cannot tell you. Providence withheld from me the vista of those days of blood and strife through which I must live before that most precious of all gifts, a good woman's love, was vouchsafed to me.

## CHAPTER VII

### WE LAND IN AMERICA

We landed in America, as all the world knows, upon a night of June in the year 1777. Our scurvy captain, having lost the best of his bearings, brought up at the mouth of the Pedee River in South Carolina, and, although not a man of us knew where we stood, we launched the boats without delay and set out to find what shelter we could. I was not upon that occasion in the cutter with M. de Lafayette; but I followed after him with Gad Grimshaw and little Honor, and no man, be sure, of all that company set eyes again with greater gratitude upon the shores of my country.

"Now, God be good to me," says the melancholy Gad, as we began to row away from the sea and the lights of scattered farmhouses came to view. "A man could die here of the pirates and make no bones about it. But, Zaida," says he, "'twere better done on a full stomach, and that's the honest truth."

"Such a man to talk of eating when one could cry for very gladness," chimed in his sister bravely. "Oh, to think, Zaida"—and this she said to me—"what M. de Lafayette must feel, so far from his friends and the young wife he loves. And perhaps never to see them again in all this world. My heart bleeds for

him; is it not wicked to speak of ourselves at such a time?"

"Why, lass," said I, "your thoughts do you credit, but a man may grow hungry for all that and be none the worse on such a night as this for a glass of something with a little sugar in it. The day will come when all the world will speak of this event and tell how a brave man came among us. But it would not like to hear that we starved him, for all that."

Gad groaned at the thought I provoked.

"Aye," cried he, "a chined turkey and a full glass of rum—and, man, a pipe afterward for honest teeth. There are those who would sell their souls to King George for as much."

"You shall find them all when we come upon a farmhouse; maybe George's Grenadiers as well—and they'll put the sugar in your rum," said I—for I reflected that we knew so little of that which had happened in America these later days that the King's troops might even be then camped upon the bank of the river we had entered so boldly. This, however, proved to be but a wild surmise, and when we had rowed on a little way we espied lights quite close to the shore and heard dogs barking so loudly that nothing but the French tongue could have so provoked them, as Gad insisted. These omens seemed to tell us that the Marquis had at length found a haven; and when we put ashore and joined him we arrived presently at the house of Major Benjamin Huger,

and discovered one of our party, the Baron de Kalb, speaking in the oddest broken English you ever heard, and imploring the folk within to open the door to him. The people inside, however, grown accustomed to the presence of English cruisers in the creek, stood to the loopholes of the farmhouse, and swore by all the rivers that they would shoot the first man who came near to them.

"Name of France, feefteen offisar, wid Marquis de Lafayette, walk over the zee to fide for Sheneral Washton"—the poor Baron stammered, for he knew no better English than a Guinea nigger; while, as everyone is aware, M. de Lafayette had scarce a word of our tongue at that time. Little Honor laughed almost until she cried when we came upon the scene, but twenty words of mine put an end to the misunderstanding and opened the gates to us.

"Major," I said shortly, "this is the Marquis de Lafayette, and these gentlemen are French officers come to volunteer in the good cause. A rascal of a captain losing his bearings has lost ours with them; but I am Zaida Kay, from Richmond, and this long fellow with me is Gad Grimshaw, that talked himself out of Philadelphia. Let it not be said that an American citizen closed his door upon brave men who have come three thousand miles to serve us. We are sore weary of the sea, and we hunger for good beds and the sound of honest voices."

Well, it proved to be an "Open Sesame" for us.

But half my words were spoken when the guns were drawn in and the gates unbarred and voices crying to make ready the table for us. As for the honest Major, I thought that he would have dropped down with surprise when I mentioned the names of my friends. Understanding that the Marquis de Lafayette really stood at his door, he kicked the unhappy niggers right and left and nearly choked the breath out of M. de Lafayette's body before he would let go of him. Truly was he a good Republican.

"Right here; walk right in," he would cry; and then to me, "Did you say it was the Marquis himself —the lad with the red hair? Well, I reckon I should have known it from the looks of him. Hi, Samuel, Zebedee, run, you niggers, run! Wake up! Francis, rout them all out; the Marquis de Lafayette! Why, it's wonderful."

So we all pressed into the hospitable house, and a right hearty welcome they gave us. None but those who have been seven weeks in a crazy ship can tell you how good it is to turn in to clean sheets and fall to sleep upon the memory of a healthy supper. Not, indeed, that we had heard overmuch good news to serve as our lullaby. Almost the first words that Major Huger spoke when we sat at his table were those which told us of America's misfortunes and of the gloomy pictures which we were about to look upon.

"Burgoyne's army has taken Ticonderoga," he

said, "and they will cut off New England from the States if nothing is done. New York is held by the English. Howe is threatening Philadelphia; the redcoats are everywhere, and we live like white men among Indians. Congress does nothing for our fellows, who have little more than rags upon their backs. If you gentlemen can help General Washington to drill an army of farmers and beat the regulars with them, you will deserve anything my country can say of you. What's wrong with us chiefly is the Tory element in our own camps. By Heaven," he cried, with warmth, "I'd hang every Tory in America and not be particular about the trees. Root and branch, gentlemen; root and branch is my motto. A long rope and many of them. But I doubt not we'll get on with the short ones," he added, in better humour, and when I had translated it all to my shipmates they laughed with him.

M. de Lafayette, the youngest among us, save for the Major's son, Francis, alone treated the matter with that gravity habitual to him.

"We are not here to teach, but to learn, Major," he said; "military service can only help a people which knows how to help itself. The greatest hope for America to-day is her faith in a great cause and her assent as a people to the doctrines for which her sons have taken up arms. I and my friends have come to you neither as Frenchmen nor as soldiers, but as servants of the great idea which animates your

country. We believe that the whole world will be gainers thereby, and we can never doubt what the outcome of this final contest must be. That is the message I bear to General Washington—it is a message I have crossed the seas to deliver."

His speech, delivered with becoming modesty and that charm of voice and manner which is common to the aristocracy of France, made a great impression upon them all; upon none more than the little lad, Francis, as the subsequent terrible years of M. de Lafayette's life were to show. He, however, held his peace that night, as young lads are wise to do; and as for the rest of us we were too weary and eager for bed to prolong an argument of the kind. Speaking for myself, I slept like a dog, and when I awoke in the morning, and a nigger looked down at me through the mosquito netting of my bed, I could not have told you where I was if a man had offered me a thousand dollars.

"Well, Sam'l," cried I, "and who may you be, and what place is this?"

"Me Massa Huger's little nigger boy—you in Carolina, sar. The gentlemen downstairs, they do a heap o' talkin', sar. Won't you raise de curtain and look out, sar? Massa Marquis had him breakfast and ride to General Washington, sar."

It all came back to me in a moment then, and I leaped up and dressed myself with what speed I could. The morning sun showed me my own beloved coun-

try, not less beloved because of the strife within it and the dangers which encompassed us about. Peaceful, however, as the scene was, with vegetation of the tropics before my windows and the laughing niggers busying about everywhere, officers and their horses in the compound by the gate, and honest American tongues to greet me, I had no will to linger here or to delay an hour. The camp, the war, the scenes of danger called me. A fever of desire to be up and doing warmed my blood and brought colour to my cheeks.

"Good-morrow to ye—good-morrow." Such was the greeting heard everywhere. Great pies and pasties and rounds of well-cooked meat they set out for our stomachs, tea and ale to quench our thirst. No talk we heard to-day of gloom or sorrow—none at least that bespoke a man's fears. To the Marquis alone had I a confidential word, and that was one of farewell. My business called me as fast as a good horse could carry me to my home at Richmond.

"We shall meet again at headquarters," I said; "do not win too much honour before I am there to share it with you, Marquis. You will be a general when next we meet, and Heaven knows what I shall be—save that to you I am your friend Zaida Kay always. God keep you and bring me soon to your side again."

He embraced me in the French fashion with much tenderness.

"I shall write to them in France what I owe to your goodness," said he, "and madame must hear of it. Oh, Zaida," he went on, "there will be a little son or daughter born to me soon, and my heart is weary for my dear wife and the sound of her sweet voice. Come to me again, my comrade, and we will speak to each other of courage. My hopes are here, but my heart is across the sea; yes, there is no cause greater than that of those we love and have left."

I gave him what consolaton I could, and called for the horse which the Major had found for me. To lean Gad Grimshaw and pretty Honor, his sister, I could speak but the briefest word, and that a promise to come to their house in Philadelphia the first day that opportunity should speak kindly to me.

"Good-bye, Mistress Honor," said I. "Next time we are on a ship together may you be more gracious to your poor brother that has such a dose of the true salt within him. We shall be on the way to France then, and the French King ready with thistles for Gad's hair; though in all truth," I added, "a comb would befit him better."

She answered me saucily enough.

"And what will you be carrying for Pauline Beauvallet?" asks she, as pert as any singing-bird lifting a proud bill above a bush. I was staggered at this, and knew not how to answer her.

"Oh!" says I; "then someone has been chattering."

"You fickle heart," cried she, "courting in a hay-loft and saying that it was your country's business. Never will I believe a word you say again, though you live to be a hundred. And she but sixteen years old, and a woman in artifice, I'll be bound."

I do believe she meant it, and for the life of me I could not move my silly tongue.

But I have always found that, in the matter of praising or blaming a sister, the age of a woman counts but little. And it were an idle task to argue the point since they are but a flock of silly little geese at the best.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A QUESTION OF HEARING

I RODE away from Major Huger's house in South Carolina, promising M. de Lafayette that the briefest weeks should pass before I found him out again. So little can the wisest or the most foolish of us foresee the future. It was the middle week of June, in the year 1777, when I left my friend. The month of May, in the year 1778, had more than half run when we met again in an hour of peril as great as any the war brought upon us.

General Washington was in his camp at Valley Forge then. Philadelphia had been taken by the English. M. de Lafayette had marched the skeleton of an army into Canada, and had returned with the shadow. The surrender of Burgoyne's army in the North, and the declared alliance between France and America, alone saved the energies and the hopes of our armies. We had been the children of patience always; but our hearts sank often during these weary months. And yet, had we known it, our cause was already won.

My own duties at this time had been largely those of an agent of commissariat, and for a long while they kept me in the North. Relieved of my burden,

and calling myself a civilian once more, I boldly visited the city of Philadelphia in the month of May and went at once to old Gad Grimshaw's house, as I had promised him. Perhaps it was an over-rash thing to do, and discovery might have brought unpleasant consequences with it, but I cared nothing for the risk when the desire to see my friends came upon me; and at Philadelphia, said I, there will be news of General Lafayette. So I went down into the town, declaring myself a farmer from Richmond; and within half an hour I stood at Gad's door and asked for Honor Grimshaw, my cousin, as I had learned to call her. You could have put an orange into the mouth I opened when a young English officer of Grenadiers came out to my knock and asked, with a drawl, if it were Fanshaw.

"Fanshaw or any other Shaw that will bring my cousin to me," says I. And so we stood facing each other, while I told myself that you could empty half a cask of good ale into the bearskin he wore.

"Oh, my beautiful eyes!" says he; "and what Scotch dog is this yelping at an honest doorway?"

"Young man," said I, "'tis a dog that will tend such sheep as I see about me. Have the goodness to remove some of that gold lace from my path or my eyes will be blinded. And long live King George," said I, "who has such pretty baa-lambs!" at which he was all up and bristling, and it may be that I should have had to teach him a lesson but for little Honor herself,

who came running out of the parlour and stood like one transfixed when she saw me.

"Why," cries she, my name happily breaking upon her tongue, "cousin, is it really you?"

"That, Mistress Honor," said I, "is a thing I will tell you presently. This gentleman calls me Fanshaw, which I like not as well as Seth. Seth Philemon, sir," I repeated, turning to him; and Heaven forgive me for denying my own name.

"Seth Philemon let it be," he rejoined surlily, "but a fine rogue of a Whig on your own showing, sir."

"What!" cried little Honor, with the prettiest assumption of surprise and delight in her roguish eyes, "has Seth been calling himself a Whig? Why, Captain Henry, there isn't a more dreadful Tory in all the country round about. A Whig! Whatever has he been saying that you should call him that?"

"Pretty compliments, Mistress Honor," cried I—"and for the matter of that the gentleman took me for a Scotchman, which I will not deny is a sour reflection. Let him knock down his kennel and I will pen in my sheep, and that shall be the end of it."

"Yes, yes," she said quickly; "why, you could be of the greatest service to Captain Henry. Who would have thought that we should see you to-day? You could help Captain Henry to find General Lafayette—you know the country so well, Seth."

Now, she said it all impulsively, as though it had been a desire to serve the English captain born sud-

denly in her wise little head; but there was that in her eyes, just a flash come and gone like lightning across a summer sky, which told me more than a book of writing could have done. "The General's in danger," said I; "she was at her wits' end before, and now I am here like some good fairy to help her."

"If I can be of any service to Captain Henry," said I, with new civility, "he shall find me willing. We farmers have not so little to put up with that we shout ourselves hoarse with any politicians. Let me know frankly of the business and I will answer as honestly. 'Tis some matter of the French gentlemen, it would appear, and no great kindness toward them. Come, friend," said I to him, dropping into the Quakers' tongue, "do thee be outspoken and thou'lt find me no less."

Now, this was a fine thing, to be sure; that I, who had gone down into Philadephia with no other idea in my busy head but to see little Honor Grimshaw and to catch a note of her laughter, should be embroiled on the very threshold of her house in that which appeared to be as serious a business as any I had met with since I sailed from France. Everything told me it was that. The young captain's agitation, Honor's startled eyes, the quick words, the hesitation, all said "danger" as plainly as a man could speak of it. As for the captain, his very questions betrayed him before twenty words had been spoken.

"Do you know of a place called Barren Hill?" asked he.

"What!" cried I, "Barren Hill, where old Parson Knox preaches in the wilderness? Not the Barren Hill upon the river bank—at Swede's ford, maybe?"

"The very place," said he; "that's where the red rat is lying," meaning, of course, General Lafayette. "Grant thinks he knows a lot. Gad, I'd like to make him look foolish."

"Captain," said I quickly, "if it's getting to Barren Hill before General Grant, I'm your man. A plague on him and his fine feathers too. He called me a ranting Whig—me, that is as good a Tory as any man in Pennsylvania. When did Grant march?"

"At dawn, with five thousand men."

"And you?"

"I ride at midnight with Grey's division."

"Then I go with you," said I, "and twenty good axes that you'll be glad of before dawn."

He looked astonished at this and asked me what I meant.

"Oh," says I, "'tis pretty plain that you are a Britisher. How's a man to go through undergrowth where a dog couldn't walk, without axes? Now, you give me a pass to come and go as I please and I'll have twenty with me by nine o'clock to-night who will take you to Barren Hill before Grant has emptied his snuff-box. But you must keep your tongue still. A word abroad and there'd be a dozen of them do-

ing the same thing for every colonel in your camp."

"Gad," says he, "I'll have the laugh of Grant."

"The city will hold its sides," said I; "but we've no time to lose. Write the paper now, and when Mistress Honor has given me bite and sup I'll know where to carry it."

Well, he sat down at a table and wrote from my dictation. Little Honor, pale and anxious, skipped to and fro like a frightened kitten; now peeping over the captain's shoulder; now in the larder where the good things lay, or making such faces at me behind the man's back that I had to feign anger to drive her from the room. When the pass was ready, my fine gentleman goes striding away in as good a conceit with himself as ever I saw a man.

"Then I am to meet you at this house?" asks he.

"'Tis better so," said I; "you will have your duties to do before then."

"Why," says he, "I'm taking Molly Swenson to the South Street Theatre, though I wouldn't have the little girl in the next room to know for anything."

"She'd break her heart and turn Whig," says I.

"I'll do a friendly thing for you," says he; "when you kiss her, catch both her arms. I've been deaf in the left ear for three days; man, she's a thoroughbred."

I agreed with him and he left me upon it; going to the South Street Theatre, I felt sure, to think of love

and pleasure and to plume himself that he would have the laugh of General Grant. He was not a minute gone when Honor came flying in and I had caught her in my arms and kissed her—as a man may be forgiven for doing in an hour of life or death.

"Oh," cried she, "and those are Whig manners, are they? Will you have me turn Tory, Zaida?"

"Why, as to that," said I, "Whig or Tory, there'll be men enough to give their ears for you. The captain tells me you've a heavy hand."

She blushed like a red rose.

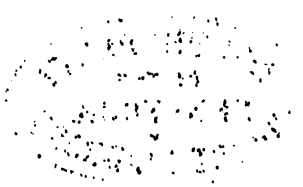
"Zaida," she said, as serious as a little Quaker girl, "are you really going to warn M. de Lafayette?"

"Honor," said I, "will there be stars in the heavens to-night, or will the witches have carried them away? Now, firstly, where's Gad, and why are you alone in the house?"

"Gad is away at the Ferry Tavern picking up the news. Oh, such a man he is to suspect a stratagem. 'Tis a deceit,' says he, 'and no Marquis of Lafayette at Barren Hill at all.' The conceit of him. 'They can't blind me,' he says, slapping his chest as though his eyes were there; and Zaida, dear Zaida, the widow is fifty."

"The widow! Now, save us all, what widow?"

"Widow Andrews, that he plays the fiddle for and sighs upon at nights. Zaida, if General Washington comes here, will he take Widow Andrews a prisoner?"



"She shall be tried at the drum's head for witchcraft."

"And will he burn Gad's fiddle?"

"Upon a pyre as high as Solomon's," said I; though Heaven only knows if Solomon had a pyre or no.

We chattered on, she feeding me like a little mother, I hearing as good news the story of the English in Philadelphia and of their wickedness. Dicing, gaming, dancing, weekly balls at the city tavern, dinners and suppers at the "Indian Queen," cock-pits and card-playing, the South Street Theatre refurbished, gowns of Venetian silk and velvet for the women, fine lace and ruffles and scarlet coats for the men. "Aye," said I, "you'll need better weapons than these for General Washington." But these were not affairs of the moment. My business was to save the life of one of the kindliest gentlemen and truest heroes that I have ever known.

"How came this news of the Marquis to Philadelphia?" I asked her while I ate.

"I cannot tell you; the spies brought it in, perhaps it is a secret which the whole town knows. Captain Henry offered it me for a kiss—I didn't buy it that way, Zaida. He says that Sir William Howe is giving a dinner party to-morrow night to meet the Marquis de Lafayette, who will be his prisoner. Is not that conceit—and are not these English proud to think so ill of us poor Americans?"

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"They may think what they please of us," said I; "we'll keep our opinions of them in fancy paper until the right time comes. In plain truth, Honor, some of them are fine young fellows, worthy of better days than those before them in this country. But there's no time to talk about it, lass. The sun's going to bed and I must be marching. Don't fear for General Lafayette. If I know anything of him or his men, it will take a better soldier than Grant to bring him in. Why you'll be boxing the English boy's ears again to-morrow night. And Gad will be fiddling for the widow——"

She made a wry grimace and lifted a pretty white hand when I would have stooped to kiss her. At the door, however, when I had mounted my horse, she ran up to me suddenly and asked a question which I did not like to hear.

"Would Pauline Beauvallet box their ears, think you?" she asked.

"I'll try it on when next I am in France," said I, and bending quickly in the saddle I kissed her in spite of all.

But the old horse gave a rare jump when she boxed him on the crupper, and he was cantering still when I rode up to the outposts and showed the pass which Captain Henry had been fool enough to give me.

## CHAPTER IX

### AFTER THE MANNER OF THE FRIENDS

MIND you, many knew Zaida Kay by name but few by face in that gay city of Philadelphia. I had been overmuch in France for one thing; the months since my return had been spent in the woods rather than the cities. None the less, it would have gone ill enough with me if any had called out my name aloud while a British officer had been about; and when a half-drunken English sentinel demanded to see my papers, I needed all the *sang-froid* I could muster to go through with it.

"Oh," cried he, pointing to a shawl muffled heavily about my neck, "here's a nanny-goat on a Newmarket gee, to be sure there is, and got it all glib enough too," for I had given him the password—"Clinton and the Grenadiers." "Well, what do you want with me, my boy, and what's this spelling-book got to do with it?"

"Captain Henry's instructions," said I briefly. "H-e-n-r-y. Can't you read it, man?—can't you read it?"

Few of the English could read in those times; but this man, I think, had had some schooling once upon a time.

"Aitch—he—hen, by the living Jingo, that spells a barn-door fowl. And the little red rat's in the hen-coop. Pass, friend, and bring old Ragoût in on your crupper. These rascally Frenchmen are knocking all the gilt off our officers. 'Tis time we larded one or two of them."

He offered me to drink out of a very crazy pot filled with mead; but, making some excuse as an officer appeared upon a black horse and began to look at me with more curiosity than I liked, I left him with a wave of the hand and cantered away by the river road. So sharp was the warning (for instinct told me that the officer doubted me) that I expected for quite a long time to hear the summons to halt or the hoofs of pursuing horses behind me, but no mischance of the kind befell; and presently, when the track became wider and leafy woods hid the river from my sight, and the sky above turned to a patch of azure, star-bedecked and infinitely beautiful, I overtook a young and solemn-looking Quaker, and perceived that he had halted for me to come up. To my astonishment the lad rode a splendid chestnut horse, and as I drew near him I could see the barrel of a pistol thrust from the black cloak, which almost obscured his saddle.

"Peace be to thee, friend," said he, in so odd and unnatural a drawl that even I, who know the people, could scarcely refrain from laughing at him.

"Peace be to thee," cried I, "and a better pair of eyes. Why, lad, they could see yonder silver mouth

away in South Street. Put it up, sir, or certainly it will do you an injury."

He looked abashed, and not a little ashamed, at this, and hid the pistol prudently When next he spoke his voice rang musically, with a burden I liked better than his nasal salutation.

"Oh," he cried, "was it showing then? Indeed, sir, I had no idea of it."

"Honest at least," said I; "and honesty's a good beginning. Next time you ride abroad, take my advice and leave your pistols and your peace behind you. You're no 'friend,' lad—you wouldn't deceive a nigger from down the river. Let me hear you for myself. God save the King! Come, shout it out for all the birds to hear."

The poor fellow looked very frightened, and stammered the words after me so dismally that I burst out laughing in his face; and, pressing my horse close to his, I slapped him on the back and asked him flatly:

"What takes you to Barren Hill? What business have you with the Marquis, then?"

He looked at me as though I held a knife at his throat.

"Oh," said he, "what should a little girl like me have to do with General Lafayette?"

"Girl!—by all the marvels—girl! Oh, here's a plot on horseback. Here's a pretty conspirator for you. Nay," I said more kindly, "but I doubt not

there is some brave word behind it, lass, and you may tell me honestly, for I am Zaida Kay, who brought the Marquis out of France, and a better friend of his you will not find afloat or ashore."

Her surprise and delight at this were pretty enough to see, and she repeated the words, "Zaida Kay, Zaida Kay," as though they had been a passport to her purpose.

"Not Zaida Kay that was with Mr. Deane in Paris?" she asked.

"The very identical rascal," said I.

"Oh!" she exclaimed; "then I am Mr. Deane's cousin, Jessie Fenn, and I am riding now to M. de Lafayette to tell him there is danger. When I heard you after me, I thought it would be Captain Henry, who gave me the pass and told me to follow a certain Seth Philemon, who was to and fro between the lines and might not be all he said he was."

I roared with laughter at this, remembering how the captain had twice been cheated.

"What!" cried I, "he told you to watch Seth Philemon! Oh, the fine figure of a man! And you to obey him, Mistress Fenn—you to follow an honest Whig like Seth!"

"Oh, Mr. Kay," said she, "you know that I never meant to do it."

"And are doing it all the while. Make a pretty curtsy to that same Seth Philemon, for he sits in the saddle beside you."

Upon which I told her all about it, and we laughed together until the woods rang. Not, mind you, that we had dallied overmuch, for our horses were at the canter while we talked, and mutually consenting, as though there were no need to add words to M. de Lafayette's peril, we began presently to gallop, and so rode for three or four good miles until we were well upon our way to Barren Hill, and might go with greater prudence.

"We are upon the same errand, lass," said I; "but two heads and two horses are better than one this night, surely. If the high road be watched, as well it may be, the General's friends must come at him by the woods, which is a harder path and not for a woman to follow. Now, do you hold on as you are going and see what luck awaits you. You have a fine horse there and no Indian could sit him better. I will go through the thicket and learn what it hides for us to fear. As I understand it, M de Lafayette has been sent to Barren Hill with two thousand men to stop supplies and watch the British. If Clinton and Grant entrap him there, he will be cut to pieces and a great blow struck against America. We must prevent that, Mistress Fenn. We owe it to ourselves and all that our friends over yonder are fighting for."

She assented, nodding her head to my words, and grown as serious as a King's judge with a hard case to try.

"They do not march till midnight," says she gravely; "Captain Henry told me so. 'That blackguardly knave who is to show us the way may cut and run for all that I know,' said he. 'Do you tell us all about him, my dear, and I'll hang a gold watch about your neck when you go with me to England.'"

"Aye," I rejoined, "if he talks like that again I'll put a hempen stock about his neck when next we meet, and lose no time about it either. Now, let us say 'Good-bye,' little mistress. I wish it could be in the Quaker fashion, for truly that hath merits as between lad and lass. But I suppose it must not be," I added naïvely.

She blushed prettily.

"Peace be to thee, friend," she cried, and whether it were accident or by design, I know not; but I found her lips so near to mine that I kissed her then and there.

"Heaven send that little Honor never hear of this," said I to myself.

And after all, I remembered, it is a fashion among the Quakers and hath a smack of something devout and Scriptural about it.

## CHAPTER X

### OLD KAYOULA

It was very dark in the woods, and I kept the path with difficulty. Old times spent in the West had made a bit of a pioneer of me, and I knew the forest sounds and could answer them when the need arose. A good horse carried me bravely through the tangled brushwood and heavy crops of new-grown grass. There were the straight poles of the silver birches, ripe blossom of May, sweet-scented lilac for my sentinels. I listened with the trained ear of a woodlander, and often paused to be sure of the stars, which must be my compass.

Who would be with General Lafayette first—Zaida Kay, his friend, or the little Quaker girl, inspired, Heaven knows by what page of an old French romance, to ride to the help of this fine gentleman of France? And would our warning, if we could deliver it, reach him in time to save two thousand honest Americans from the bayonets of Clinton's Grenadiers? Fate alone could answer that riddle. But my heart warmed at the prospect of meeting my dear friend once more; and I thought of all the hundred things I had to speak of, the news to tell and hear, and the hopes to share. It may be that I fell into a

reverie of old France, dwelling upon her splendid cities, her gay Court, and many a pair of dark eyes I had looked into there. I cannot tell you, for, however it was, my boast of a woodlander's ear came home to roost soon enough, and I was down on the grass and half a dozen painted Indians atop of me before a man could have cried "Whist!" or as much as clapped a hand to his holsters.

They had me, sure enough, those great lithe arms, in which I could but struggle as a fretful child; and, for a truth, I thought it was all up with Zaida Kay, and that one of the shining hatchets would find what brains I had without so much as a word or question put to me. Such had been their cunning that I had not even heard a twig snap, nor seen a blade of grass rustle, before the Indians sprang upon me with the agility of panthers, one clapping a hand over my mouth, another catching my bridle-rein, a third lifting me from the horse as though I had been a baby and no more concern to them. Down upon the grass they held me flat, an axe at my temples and their hot breath blowing upon my astonished eyes. A movement would have cost me my life! I lay as still as a mouse and waited for them to kill me.

We were in a little clearing of the woods, with lilac and laburnum all about us, and new green grass for a May-day carpet. I counted ten Indians dancing about me, and I doubted not that others were hidden in the bracken. Why they did not make an end of

"THE INDIANS SPRANG UPON ME WITH THE AGILITY OF PANTHERS"

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it I know not to this day, but such my destiny was to be; and suddenly, at the bidding of an impulse I can in no way account for, I uttered a word which no sorcerer's magic could have bettered.

"Kayoula," I gasped; "old Kayoula!"

Now "old Kayoula" had been the name which the Oneida Indians had given the Marquis de Lafayette when he visited them last winter. He had mentioned it often in his letters, and had spoken of the great love they bore toward him—both the Oneidas and the Tuscaroras. Being sure that any Indians posted in the woods by the Schuylkill River must be the friends of the American cause, I understood that I had but to make my business known to them to win their goodwill upon the instant. And so it befell. Hardly was the magic out of my mouth than they all jumped up together, and, raising their hands in the air in the attitude of men who prayed, they shouted, "Kayoula! Kayoula!" At the same moment a Yankee scout, bearded and brown as a berry, came running out of the thicket and asked in a tempest of rage what the noise meant and who the fool was who made it.

"Why, it's old Joe Starling!" cried I. "And how in thunder did you get here?" I asked him, for I had last seen him at Reading, where he had found an escort for the Valley Forge supplies. For a moment he looked as astonished a man as ever was; then he slapped me on the shoulder and said in a whisper, which was comical to hear:

"I reckon I floated! You'll be from Philadelphia, ain't you? Waal, the woods is full of bearskins, and the less of Zaida Kay that's above the mealies the better. Cuss those grinning paint-pots. They'd murder their mothers for old Kayoula, if he asked them. Whist! whist! white man coming!" he cried to them, with a sudden gesture of alarm, at which they all fell flat upon the grass and were hidden in a twinkle. We two remained together in the glade and I had caught my horse again.

"My road's to Barren Hill," I said quickly. "Old Kayoula has got to be informed that the bearskins are moving. Why, there'll be Grant and Clinton abroad just now with five thousand men. If they catch the Marquis, I wouldn't be the one to carry the news to General Washington to-morrow. We must get the message through, Joe, and lose no time about it."

"That's so," said he—and I perceived that he had been expecting the tidings. "Old Fireworks isn't going to dance with the white squaws all the time, I reckon; and that's what what I told them at Valley Forge. 'He'll chew venom and march out now that Clinton tops him,' I said, and here he is by your showing. Waal, boy, if we get through, our star's shining, and that's white man's truth. The woods are full of them. You could eat bearskin if your fancy's that way."

"Not while there's good beef," said I; and I added

upon it, "Full or empty, we're going by them, Joe. The man's my friend, and I don't leave him in the ditch while there's a spade to dig him out. A mere lad," I said, "with a girl-wife at home. We can spare a few before we let him down. Give me three of those red demons, and I'll answer for the meat and the message. The clock's galloping, and that's what we should be."

I turned to mount my horse, never doubting that he would answer me as I wished, but hardly had I set a foot in the stirrup when there came a low whistling from the grass behind us, and instantly he caught my arm and dragged me back.

"The English!" he cried, and he ducked down and began to creep toward the thicker undergrowth.

Here, then, was a pretty place to be in. If I followed him and lay low, good-bye to the warning which would save General Lafayette. If I made a dash for it, the British would shoot me as I went. Perplexed beyond bearing, I did what none but a fool would have done, and just stood there scratching my head and asking myself what next. It may be that indecision saved my life. I cannot be sure of it. The Grenadiers, it appears, beat the brushwood and did not advance in the open. I stood out on the sward, and before they perceived me they had trodden upon a redskin, and he leaped up, axe in hand, to begin the drollest battle that ever was fought in all that great and memorable war.

Let there be no misunderstanding about the manner of this. Here upon the one side, you had a regiment of Grenadiers just marching out of a city where they had been living kings' lives for two months or more—drinking, dicing, dancing with the girls. These lads, plucky enough in a common way, believed that they would find American soldiers in the woods and meet them man to man as soldiers should. Some of them had never seen an Oneida Indian in all their days. What must they think, then, when beating the undergrowth as hunters beat it for game, up springs a painted demon, all red ochre and feathers, and shrieks out a war-song that would have scared the Pope? What could they think of it? I ask—and I answer myself that they didn't stop to think. Perhaps they set it down to the strong drink they had taken in Philadelphia. I heard a sergeant shouting to them that the figures were alive; but no sooner had he said it than he turned and ran like a lad; and as he ran he bawled to those behind him that the top was off the pit and the ould divil himself let loose. As for the Oneidas, take it from me or not as you will; but when they saw the bearskins dodging behind the trees they believed that some new kind of wild beast had been let loose upon them, and they leaped backwards in as abject a state of terror as ever I beheld. Pell-mell, headlong, one atop of the other, they fled through the woods, away toward the west and a known enemy. I was left alone in the

glade, for old scout Joe had long since disappeared; and while I could long hear the wild shouts from both parties—the English dashing for Philadelphia, the Indians for any port quit of devils—these too died away at last, and the sweet silence of the woods came back unbroken.

"And now," said I, "with all speed to Barren Hill."

For I remembered my mission and M. de Lafayette's danger; and putting spurs to my horse I galloped on through the wood, and the white moon shone upon me full and glorious in bewitching majesty.

## CHAPTER XI

### BARREN HILL

THE path through the thicket was not easy to find, and I lost it more than once when the moonlight played me false. But for this mishap fortune had no more tricks in store for me. Thrice I rode by stragglers from the British forces, but managed to be quit of them. A young cavalry officer who stopped me, as bold and handsome an English lad as it has been my pleasure to meet, took to my plausible tale so kindly that I felt almost ashamed to tell it. "You honest farmers," said he, "are the very men King George loves. Here's a guinea to drink my health at the first inn you pass by. Fore Gad," says he, "we have a pretty grudge against Grant for bringing us here at this time of night."

I put it to him that he would be at Sir William Howe's party to meet the Marquis de Lafayette in irons to-morrow night; and at that he laughed and protested that he had no stomach for it.

"We'll put him in a cage and show him at a guinea a peep," says he; "if the fellow is a bit of a milliner, he'll make his fortune. Faith, sir, I was to have been at the South Street ball as Apollo to-night—a golden Cupid with the nattiest pair of

wings that ever carried rouge to Venus. I made 'em from an old pair of mosquito curtains, got in Carolina. Lafayette may be able to cut out the sleeves. Egad, it's the sleeves that beat me and what the women call the overlay."

I told him that he would learn it all in good time, perhaps make a gown for his mother when the war was over. Why should I have laughed at him more than at the others? Did not Major André tell the world afterwards that he had learned to be a dressmaker during that winter in Philadelphia? And this poor boy did no more than imitate his betters. When I left him it was with a promise to "keep a weather eye open for the Yankee outposts"; "and be sure," said I to myself, "that's just what I will do." Half an hour afterwards, at the dawn of a lovely summer's day, I rode out of the wood at last; and the very first man I met was General Lafayette himself, and with him the little Quaker girl who had gone on to warn him last night.

"Thank Heaven for this," I cried, leaping from my horse; "and, man," says I, "my heart is too full to speak all that the heart would say."

I found him but little changed, though his figure had somewhat filled out and his General's uniform gave him a manly air above his years. His greeting to me, even then, in a moment of peril which no words could overstate, was that of brother to brother, parted awhile and now come together to bear witness

to the truth of their affection. He embraced me tenderly and told me how often he had regretted the mischance which separated us.

"But we have had our duty to do and must not complain," says he; "and, Zaida, if this news be true and Clinton has trapped me, I could find the heart to say that I wish the dragoons had taken me at St. Jean de Luz. Oh, think of it, old friend; two thousand of our best men ambushed here, and none knows if a man of us will get out alive. To no other would I say it, but you have ever shared my most secret thoughts. We are lost, Zaida; lost for all that the courage and skill of men can do."

What could I say to this? My soldier's eye had already approved the position he had taken up. His men were bivouacked upon a bare hill. A ridge of rock lay before them, and upon that the guns had been placed. The river ran upon his right, deep and without a ford, so far as I knew. A wood and some old stone houses sheltered him upon the left hand. If he could not race against the English for a crossing called Swede's Ford, all were lost indeed. Trapped in that hole, his two thousand men must perish to a man. And I, should I insult him by telling him so? By no means, for his clever head had taken it all in as surely as General Washington himself might have done.

"The first step is the only step," I said quickly. "How far is Clinton off, and by what road is he coming?"

"The scouts are out to tell us," he rejoined; "we shall know before the clock strikes again. You have ridden far, old Zaida. Come and warm yourself with a dish of tea and help me to think—for never have I needed your help more surely."

We took the tea in the porch of the old church, which he had made his headquarters. I was glad to drink warm drink; but the anxious faces all about me, the ragged clothes of my brave countrymen, the smiling face of M. de Lafayette and the lie it covered so surely—these were a poor breakfast enough, even though a man got it with an old friend's voice ringing in his ears and the prettiest sprig of a Quaker girl to fill his cup and chide him for spilling it. The General left us for a time, and that Jessie and I spoke of him when his back was turned goes without telling. Few found any other subject when the Marquis was near by.

"He's barely twenty-one, Jessie," said I; "and what man of fifty could carry himself in a better way? You'll have to be up and off presently, my girl, for this is not a morning for the ladies to be abroad. Take my advice and ride away to Valley Forge. You've a clever tongue and can answer the English questions, I'll be bound. Tell them that General Lafayette is at breakfast and will be very pleased to see them if they have a mind to visit him. I shall not forget to speak to General Washington about this. There's been no braver thing done since the war broke out."

The vixen laughed at this (for vixen she was), and not a glass bead did she care, I am sure, whether General Washington heard of it or not.

"I came because I had to, and I hate the little gold soldier man who laughed at me," says she. And then she asked, "What American girl would not have been glad to do it, Mr. Kay? Suppose that I was his child-wife over in France, should I not expect American girls to help me? Oh, there was fun on the road, too; and one great man with an animal on his head, he called me a sniffling ranter, 'and,' says he, 'I'll come to your meetings, lad, and dance the fandango too, if you'll bring the pretty girls with you.' I'm sure that none of them thought of General Lafayette when they spoke to me. I looked so innocent."

"It's a way your sex has got," I rejoined; "daisies could not match them for whiteness—but mind the thorns when you'd pluck them. And I'll take leave to tell you that the tea's boiling and you are spilling it on my fingers, miss. Now, do you ride to Valley Forge or do you not?"

"I would not leave General Lafayette for a golden crown," says she; and while, for spilling the hot tea upon my fingers, I could have boxed her ears willingly, this reply left me wishful to be alone upon the road with her once more.

"I'll keep your secret," said I, teasing her; "and here's the General coming back for a little of that

same tea you're so free with. Be serious, Jessie, for an older man might wear a sadder face, and less wisely."

"Why," says she, "you are a pair of boys together"—and this was true enough, though the war had seemed to make a sober man of me. A pair of lads together indeed we were upon a day which should write history for England and America, though you would never have guessed it by the General's smiling face.

"I must apologise for trespassing," said he, taking the cup from her hands. "It may be a very long time before I drink tea again, Miss Fenn. The memories of this will be as sweet as—no, I will not say sugar, for I never use it. But it will be sweet enough," he added gallantly, "and just the half of a minute to drink it."

He sat beside us upon a great boulder of stone, and I had no two opinions about his mood.

"The riders are in, then?" I asked him.

"There is but one to come," said he.

"Do they speak of bearskins, General?"

"Of nothing else, Zaida. We are quite surrounded. Miss Fenn here will do wisely, I think, to get a cloak from one of the cottages. At least they will respect the women."

He looked at her meaningly; but she shook her vixenish head and would not hear of it.

"I'm off by Matson's Ford," says she. "No

English soldier will follow there. I heard them plan it all in Philadelphia; but no one spoke of Matson's Ford. You'd go that way yourself, General, if you were as wise as I am."

He regarded her with astonishment; then turned to me no less amazed.

"She speaks of something new," he said rapidly, in French. "There is great danger, undoubtedly. The English are in the woods—Grant and Clinton with five thousand as they told us. I do not believe any one will get away alive. What is this Matson's Ford? Why have I not heard of it?"

I stood to my feet and questioned the girl sharply.

"It's a matter of life or death," said I very solemnly; "and the woods are full of Englishmen. If we can get out by this Matson's Ford, we'll have the laugh of Clinton yet. Let it be yes or no, my girl. Can troops pass or can they not?"

"My brother goes every day," said she, as cool as any Indian; "the road lies over there, at the back of the thicket. I will show General Lafayette where, if he wishes it!"

The Marquis grown serious in an instant, answered her by a gesture of the hand which said, "Take me to the place." Together the three of us strode toward the wood, and in five minutes we had come upon the road she spoke of. But a waggon track, the tracks of a waggon were new upon it; and where a waggon may go, there, surely, may

troops follow. So much at least General Lafayette told himself while he stood there and debated a resolution which might save two thousand lives or lose them.

"I trust this child," says he to me in French.

"With reason," said I; "she risked more than life to come to you."

"There is no other way, Zaida. This unknown road, or yonder on the grass! Which shall it be?"

"The road," said I, "and Heaven send shallow water."

He pressed my hand upon it and was about to speak to the girl again, when two or three of his officers came running up in as crazy a state as honest men could be, and cried out all together that the British were upon us. No sooner was it said than we heard the crack of rifles in the woods, and understood that the pickets were firing. Now could a man believe that a true soldier led him. Calm as in his own splendid house in Paris, greatly dignified in his bearing, the Marquis addressed these frightened gentlemen and won them to him.

"The bravest men among us will stand to the guns," said he. "I name you, Captain Fennimore, first among them. Our comrade Allenton here will help me to throw out false heads of columns; I think that Mr. Kay can be of service there. The others will march by this road to Matson's Ford. I beg leave to introduce you to Lieutenant Fenn, who knows the

way and will help our men to keep it. Not a moment is to be lost, gentlemen, if you please. At once."

His manner, his winning smile alike compelled them. They saluted and ran to their posts. For my part, I understood his plan almost before he had done speaking. A score of men were to enter the woods to deceive the British while our troops escaped by Matson's Ford. Upon me it lay to see that this part of it was well done; and taking a few likely fellows with me, I ran away to the thicket upon our left hand and waited for the attack. It was my first good blow for America, and none could tell whether it were not also to be the last.

Amid the trees I could perceive the red coats here and there, with the sun flashing upon their bright accoutrements and their bayonets already fixed. The musket I snatched up from a bivouac came heavily to my hands as I raised it to fire upon a fellow-creature; aye, and upon one I would still have called brother. But duty spoke loudly and must be heard. I pulled a trigger, and a monstrous, red-faced man, creeping up between the oaks, reeled back and sank from my sight; and, boy that I was, I thought upon his staring eyes, now looking upward to the skies whither the spirit had fled. I remembered a great hope that he had suffered no pain in his death. There were bullets beginning to sing about me by this time and I think that they put self-accusation from me and fired my blood with devilish desires. I had a lust

to kill—I knew not why. Loading my piece as quickly as powder-horn and wads would let me, I fired again and cursed the bullet because it went astray. Thus the madnes of battle goes.

So there knelt I, by a silver birch, shooting at the red-coats as a boy may throw stones at the swallows. Behind me, as fast as might be, the main body of General Lafayette's army marched under cover of the woods to Matson's Ford and the river. The General himself, still smiling in that pretty way none will ever forget, stood upon the ridge of rocks, helping the gunners to get the cannon away. The woods themselves were full of wild shouting and men gripping the throats of men, bayonets driven into beating hearts, screams and cries, and the charnel of war. Had I been as prudent a man as some have thought me, then I should have held to my place no longer than the trick required. We had to get the British to believe that we intended to cut our way through them. I have no doubt that they did believe it directly we began to fire upon them. What should I do then—mad as any Indian on the warpath—but run amok among them, clubbing at this one with the butt-end of my musket, hitting that one with my fist, and so behaving that my very rashness struck terror into them. The guns, meanwhile, were right away—I could hear voices holloaing after me, "Zaida Kay! Zaida Kay!"—and yet, madman that I was, I did not turn back.

Now came I as nearly to my end as any that have lived to tell a tale. There were three Grenadiers before me, one coming at me upon my left hand, and others near by to help him. I had broken the stock of my musket clubbing at a tree where I thought to find a head. My pistols were both empty. A lusty soldier aimed a fearful blow at me, and struck a comrade behind him as he raised his sword a second time. "Done for!" said I, and yet, God knows, the fear of death was less upon me than the desire to kill these men. I hit the sergeant so full a blow upon the forehead that he fell seemingly stone-dead. A bullet in my thigh stopped me no more than a pea would stop an eagle. Down went the fellow who fired it, his jaw cracking to my fist. A second, a third leaped upon me. I felt that I could lift mountains from my shoulders; and then—for men are but grown children after all—I caught sight of the blood on my boots, and, sick and faint in an instant, I went down below them, and "This is the end of Zaida Kay," said I.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE RACE FOR THE FORD

It is a wonderful thing to write, and yet the true story of the day has put it beyond all dispute that those who saved me from the British were the British themselves.

There I lay faint and sick upon the ground, bearskins all about me, and my own friends powerless to help me. What, then, could save me from the muskets upraised to beat my brains out? I'll answer for the second time, the British themselves, coming out of the woods pell-mell and falling, as Heaven is my witness, upon the heated Grenadiers. In a twinkling now all was confusion. The men round about me shouted to one another that the red-coats amidst the trees were Washington's dragoons—for we had red-coated cavalry at Valley Forge. I heard young officers commanding the bugles to sound the charge. Horsemen here, foot-soldiers there, went tearing by to rout—their own countrymen. A sounder man than Zaida Kay would have held his sides with laughter. I was too far gone for that, and, crawling like a babe, cursing my lameness and thinking only of the Marquis and the guns, I made what way I could to escape the press. Herein fortune helped me strangely for

the second time that day. Gad Grimshaw, of Philadelphia, hearing that I had ridden to warn General Lafayette, raced out of the city with the British troops to learn, at Honor's bidding, what luck attended me. He found me wriggling like a snake in the grass. His strong arms lifted me up; his mad speech told me that all was well with him.

"Oh, vile log!" cried he, "oh, barbed serpent!" for he believed at first that an Englishman lay in the grass.

I cut him short by staggering to my feet and clutching at his throat in a way that went near to choking him.

"Aye," said I, "a barbed serpent and a ranting fool upon the top of it. I'm hit, old Gad. Help me to walk, man. Take me to the General. Can't you see how it goes with me?"

He came to his senses shortly, blinking wonderingly at me, then at my wound, and again at the church wherein General Lafayette had bivouacked last night.

"They have hurt thee, Zaida?"

"A ball in the leg—honest flesh and no bones, by the feel of it."

"Praise God thou hast two legs. Says Honor upon our parting, 'Go frighten the English.' I am here, Zaida."

He did not cease to talk while we limped through the coppice together.

I answered him to bid him be silent and make haste. His story was true enough, and no man could deny the humour of it. Here were Clinton's men cutting the throats of Grant's men, as he said. Debouching from two sides of the wood, and believing that General Lafayette lay between them, they rushed upon their fellows like niggers gone mad. I could perceive them, amid the trees, chasing their own comrades at the bayonet's point; their words, when they discovered each other, surpassed all decency of speech. And, more wonderful still, not one bethought him of asking by what road the Marquis had escaped, or whether any unknown ford would let him cross the river. They were content to fight each other like men wild in drink; and while they fought Gad brought me to the coppice by the church, and there I found General Lafayette himself. To him I told my story in the briefest word, and begged him not to encumber himself with any such baggage.

"You have enough to do with your own," said I; "let me take my luck. I do not fear them. They are just to their prisoners."

He regarded me with blank astonishment.

"You shall ride upon a gun until we catch the waggons up," said he firmly. "What, leave you Zaida! I would sooner leave my right hand."

So they lashed me to a gun-carriage, and, one of them staunching and binding my wounds as we went our little force lumbered on toward the river, upon

whose far bank lay safety. To say that the peril had been averted would be to give no true account of our situation. Here we were, some five hundred silent men (for the others were across the Schuylkill by this time), marching down a narrow path with an enemy upon either hand, and only their silly mistake between us and annihilation. We knew that they must discover the trick sooner or later, and could but pray that it would be later. For my part, I confess that I have never come so near downright cowardice as in the minutes of that terrible flight.

Consider how it went with me, roped to a cannon, helpless, sick and wounded. Had I been able to take a sword in my hand, not all the British in America would have frightened me; but, compelled to be an onlooker, I had the fear of death at my heart, and it seemed to me that hours were passing and we still in the heat of it. Then, at last, they began to fire at us. Some of them, less foolish than the others, had discovered the ruse. Their bullets came pattering through the leaves like rain in August. A man fell dead from his horse almost at my feet. I perceived them everywhere, climbing into the trees to spy upon us, racing like prairie ponies at our side, but dreadfully afraid of our muskets, as it appeared, and not sure of their own purpose. These things affrighted one who took no part in them. General Lafayette they could not affright, nor did that kindly smile once pass from his face.

"Courage!" he would cry from time to time, and, falling into the French tongue, he spoke words of hope which few beyond myself understood. I asked him if the ford across the river were distant. He answered, still smiling, "So near that we shall all sup with General Washington to-night."

"Then," said I, "give me a musket, and let me have a slap at them."

The reply amused him, and I could see that he was well pleased with it.

"Some one give Mr. Kay a musket," says he to those about him; "he would fire a salute in our honour. Come, my brave lads, there is the river and yonder lies safety. Oh, we shall laugh together at Clinton to-night. What will General Washington say if he hears we have not done our duty? Courage, friends! I will lead you across; I will show you the way."

So his brave words put heart into them. The scene itself will never pass from my memory: the river and the little hills upon the far side of it; the troops splashing across the ford, the lumbering cannon, the grave faces, the red-coats in the woods. I had a musket in my hand and old Gad Grimshaw to ask after my welfare. The brave company of men which hauled the guns across the water marched with teeth clinched and hands upon their triggers. From time to time a comrade went down and did not rise again. We had no right to delay, and so we left them to

the British. Why not, since the British were brothers in humanity, a noble enemy man for man, fighting not for a nation's honour, but for a statesman's folly! This I thought upon as I watched the combat and heard the bullets singing above me. Not for right or wrong, justice or law, did these poor fellows reel and fall upon the grass. They had no quarrel with us. In cool blood I would have grasped the hand of any one of them as a comrade. And this I write down, once and for all: there are no braver men on any continent, and their boast at home, that each is as good as three Frenchmen and a Portuguese, has truth behind it.

"Friend Gad," said I, speaking my thoughts aloud, "they fight like demons, surely?"

"Aye, and they come red-hot from the pit."

"If we go no faster, Gad, they will be at the river before us yet."

"'Tis the strong drink in them that works the wickedness. What shall I say to Sister Honor if we be lost?"

"Tell her that you died like a good American. Nay, Gad, in truth, there's more than jesting to be done. Here's one from the pit that will have something to say to you."

A heavy man leaped down upon us from the bank above at my words; and, being followed by three yelling Grenadiers, came headlong toward the cannon upon which I rode. General Lafayette stood some

twenty paces from us at the moment. My situation forbade me to see clearly all that happened, but I heard a great clamour and shouting; and then I beheld the Marquis himself, fencing, as adroitly as a *maître d'armes* in Paris, with a mighty young swell of a British officer who cut and thrust, and laughed and leaped like some great joyous lad let suddenly out of school. None interfered with these two; none stood between them. I watched their blades with a great weight at my heart, knowing that any unlucky chance might make of me the saddest man in America that day. Nor could I keep from my eyes the picture of a baby-girl away in France and of a child-wife with a brave man's letters in her hands. "God guard him," said I, and then I could see no more for the red-coats swarmed about the cannon like wolves, and such an outcry arose, such a brawling, such a din, that the pit might have been opened even as old Gad Grimshaw surmised.

Of all the perils of that astounding day, none set a man's heart beating as wildly as that affair about the gun. Locked together, claw and tooth, man up, man down, muskets sending good teeth flying, swords running through men's bodies as though they had been pumpkins, English and Americans alike forgot that they were Christian men and fought in the manner of red-skins. Nor had I been wiser if all my limbs had been given back to me. The ropes which lashed me to the gun cut my flesh as I strained

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to be up and among them. Upon me no less than upon the others the fever fell, and I discharged my musket blindly as a child might have done. The noise rang in my ear like a voice of thunder. I cried aloud, "Lafayette! Lafayette!" while the powder-smoke half blinded me and there was sulphur in my throat. What my shot had effected, whether it had killed friend or foe, Heaven alone could tell me; and yet presently a great hairy man bawled to them that I had shot "Blade Rory," and that he would have the life of me. I recollect his grizzly beard, stubbly as the quills of a porcupine, when he thrust it into my face and bent over me; I can see his blood-shot eyes and hear his foul oaths upon what I had done—and yet he did not kill me as he threatened; but, possessed of some mad notion to get the musket from me, he seized the stock of it in both hands and wrestled with me for it. My resolution was not less proud than his. I clung to the musket as to life itself—clung to it when I believed that all was lost—clung to it as the gunners raced for the river—clung to it while the wheels of the carriage splashed in the water—and was clinging to it still when the poor fool's strength gave out; and, dropping back with a loud cry, he sank before my amazed eyes.

Reaction came upon me then as a cloud. I fainted at the sight of that death-stricken face peering at me from the green waters. And the next thing I knew

of it was that I lay in M. de Lafayette's arms in our camp at Valley Forge, and that General Washington stood by my side to tell me I had done well.

"A miracle of a musket," says he, "and fired in God's good providence, Mr. Kay. You shot the Irish colonel that led the Grenadiers. I doubt not that my dear friend owes his life to you."

I would not answer it, but, pressing the Marquis's hand, I told him that when next we called a coach together it should be in his own beloved France, "and," said I, "there shall be children's voices to cheer us on."

To this his emotion forbade a rejoinder and I perceived the tears gathering in his kindly eyes. Nor did I know that he had lately received news from Auvergne, and that his beloved daughter Henriette was dead.

## CHAPTER XIII

### WE VISIT FRANCE AGAIN

A MAN may hap upon a more troublesome affair than a ball in the leg, which keeps him beneath a shady tree when the weather falls hot, and sends him, at the end of it, upon a stout ship to witness the honours which a great city pays to the man he has learned to love—and in some part to share them.

My going to France, be sure, was a sore blow to little Honor Grimshaw; but that could not be helped. She had nursed me to health with a mother's tenderness; it brought shame to my cheeks to watch the roses upon her own while the broth simmered or the bandages were undone; but what prudence would have spoken of marriage while the red-coats were out from Rhode Island to Carolina, and every passing horseman carried tale of plot and plan and all the stealthy news of war? Nay, and more, I knew not in my heart whether I had the right to speak to her of marriage or no. There are some things we do better not to hide from ourselves. I had not yet come to such years of discretion that a pretty pair of eyes could not disconcert me, nor a well-turned ankle bid my heart beat quicker. And how, said I, if these things be so after marriage?

So thus it went in the little thatched cottage upon the Schuylkill banks, whither they had carried me after our affair at Barren Hill. Roses breathed their fragrance upon me from many a lovely bush; the water ran sweet and cool at the garden's edge; I had umbrageous leaves above my head, and in my hand the letters which General Lafayette had written me. And there, curled up on the grass at my feet, lay the prettiest, nattiest little girl in all America that day. She would have me for the asking—I doubted it not then; I doubt it not now; and yet I thank Heaven that I forebore to ask her. The years to come taught me to know myself more truly; to know her as a man should know but one woman in all the world.

"And is it good news of General Lafayette that keeps you like a bear with a sore head, Zaida?" she would ask me, while I read the letter and thought upon the news it spoke of. Truly men are all for self and little for others when affairs of urgency come before them.

"The Marquis and Lord Carlisle are calling each other names," said I, waking up at her words; "our dear friend would give his lordship six inches of French steel, and for that he has no stomach. They've made a sorry mess of things at Rhode Island, and I am beginning to doubt if we are any better for many of these Frenchmen that Paris is sending us. Their Count d'Estaing is no match for the great Lord Howe afloat, and, but for the storm which an honest

American wind had the mind to stir up, there would be French frigates at the bottom of the sea this day. Lord Carlisle, it seems, called the Frenchmen perfidious dogs, and here's our boy Marquis wanting to slit his weasand. General Washington does well to speak of sending him to France to beg money for our poor fellows. They march in rags, Honor. They haven't shoes to their feet and scarcely bread for their mouths. I feel shame to sit here and do nothing for them—and yet a man with one leg! Lord, how little grateful we are for the right use of our limbs while we have them."

Her little flaxen head was bowed down when I made this news known to her, and I could see that her clever brain thought upon it all with a woman's shrewdness.

"You mean to say that the English won the battle at Rhode Island, Zaida?" she asked me presently.

I answered her that there had been no battle at Rhode Island, only a skirmish here and a skirmish there; much marching and countermarching, and going to and fro of the great ships, until the winds of heaven scattered them and left the issue where it was. She listened attentively, but could make little of it.

"Will America never be free, Zaida?"

"Nay, Honor, there's no night that lasts forever."

"And the Marquis is going to France again?"

"So it would appear by this"—holding up the paper in my hand.

"Then you will be going with him, Zaida?"

"Such news would make a man of me. And yet"—I added quickly, as the pretty eyelids drooped—"and yet I would take a heavy heart with me."

"You dear, dishonest old Zaida; I know you would dance to go."

"Nay, Honor, a man that has but one leg——"

"And you would see Pauline Beauvallet again if you went to France, Zaida."

"Ha! that pretty bit of humbug who has a French lover—aye, a dozen maybe, by this time. Have I no eyes to look round about me?"

"A man's eyes soon tire when a woman is their target."

"Aye, there you are. And there's one woman he does not need to look at, for he carries her image in his heart. Honor, think you that if I lived a thousand years I would forget this cottage and the little girl who made it a heaven to me? Let me cut off my right hand first."

She laughed mischievously, tossing the curls from a forehead that would have shamed a flower for whiteness."

"An arm and a leg—oh, my poor Zaida!"

"There would be a hornpipe upon your brother's grave, Honor if you were by."

"Poor old Gad! He is to ride here to-day, remember."

"I'll not doubt he'll be sorrowful enough. My lameness lies heavily upon me that I cannot walk a little way to meet him. But, perchance, I could lean upon your shoulder, Honor."

"Oh, the great strapping man! I'll not have his one arm upon me."

"Then you shall have the pair of them," said I; and upon my honour it nettled me to watch her playing cat and mouse with me, and to know all the while that her tenderness toward me was a thing a man were a villain to pass by.

"Did you lend Jessie Fenn the pair when you rode with her to Barren Hill?"

"Who has been telling you that tale, now?"

"Why, who should tell it but Jessie herself? To be kissed and hugged by the great Zaida Kay, who sailed from France with M. de Lafayette; to have him ogling you with his beautiful eyes—'my dear,' this, 'my dear,' that. 'You're the pride of America. I will sing your praises in ballads—and I have some music in me, faith, and the great ladies of Paris, they are all at my feet. Peace, friend, I will salute thee in the manner of thy elders!' Oh, Zaida, how could she hold her tongue? 'Twere not human to do so."

"Jessie Fenn is a little spitfire," said I; "were I not lamed, it may be for life, I would go this instant

and bring her to her knees. Faugh! a conceited vixen that would have the men after her——"

"And will you tell me such a story? Did you not kiss her, Zaida?"

"Upon my honour—if it were that our faces came near to touching—and, the Lord be praised, there is your brother Gad, riding in at the gate."

"Coward," says she, "you cannot even tell a story"—and with that she ran away to meet Gad, and left me as angry in confusion as ever a man found himself. And yet, Heaven knows, had she dwelt there but a minute longer, I would have asked her to be my wife—and that's the whole truth of it.

Old Gad was all smothered in dust when he appeared among us; and first he asked for a jug of ale before a single word of news fell from his lips. There he stood a full minute with the bottom of the beaker saying its prayers to the sky; little Honor ready with another at his side, and Zaida Kay eager to jump down his throat for tidings. When he set the jug down, nothing but a great big "Ah!" proceeded from his lips, and at that I could have knocked him down with my crutch.

"For a fine capacity in swallowing, you have no match in Pennsylvania, Gad," said I. He admitted it, without a murmur.

"I have something of the camel in me, true," says he; "and yet a man may take his hat off to that

same beast when he has ridden fifteen leagues to bear good news to his friend."

"Good news for me, old Gad?"

"Such discretion may name it. Let no preamble be a stumbling-block. All is lost at Newport. The Frenchmen 'bouts ship—up comes Howe—storm and tempest and cataracts of seas. We quarrel amongst ourselves. Here is one crying that your fine Marquis should have done this; another for him to do that. Says General Washington, 'We have no better soldier in America.' I would make a commencement and say——"

"A pest upon commencement; where be continuation?"

"In sequence, waiting upon patience. Since things are so at Newport——"

"Newport—make an end of Newport, for my sake."

"Says General Washington when he would speak of Sullivan, in so far as Green differs from him——"

"May they rest in purgatory together. The news man, what is it?"

"That ye are to go to France with General Lafayette, and that the frigate *Alliance*, now boarding at Boston, shall carry you there together."

"The Lord be praised," cried I; and so many were the emotions his tidings brought me that I stood up before them both and hugged Gad as though he had been a child.

But little Honor danced for joy, seeing me stand upon my legs.

"Now shall I be well rid of him," cries she; "the hypocrite, the villain, who told me but one hour ago that he would never walk again."

I answered her not. In truth I suffered agonies of pain that night for my imprudence. Perchance she knew that which I had found no tongue to tell her. Women are shrewd, and men's hearts are open books wherein they may read at their pleasure. I cannot say it was; but ask me to name a heaven upon earth, and I will speak first of a little cottage by a river's bank and of flaxen curls therein, and of that most sacred thing, the richest treasure a man may gain—a pure woman's love and the grace that hides it from the world.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BELLS UPON THE PANNIKIN

THE frigate *Alliance* left the port of Boston in the month of January after the affair at Barren Hill. She was a fine stately ship of thirty-six twelve-pounders, and her commander was Captain Landais, of St. Malo. As all the world knows, the winter of the year fell bitter cold, and we had to cut a passage through the ice before we could hoist a sail at all. Then a tempest fell upon us, violent beyond all experience; and for days together we rolled and sagged in the trough of the sea, venturing no more than the main-sail upon our masts.

I have no great liking for the sea; and yet I found myself aboard this fine ship with no little pleasure. To be with my dear friend, General Lafayette, to enjoy the solace of his company and witness the example of his life, were advantages that only base ingratitude would have ignored. And yet, to be honest, he was sore ill and depressed for many days after leaving Boston; and he had in his head that wild notion, which no logic could destroy, that we should never make the coast of France. In vain I spoke to him of his dear wife waiting for him at

home and of the babe which had been born to him in his absence. The tempest prevailed above his courage—he became in part a cynic; and that was a mood for which I had little liking.

"I have done well, certainly," he would say, "at my time of life—with a dear heart waiting for me in France—with my name, rank, and fortune, to leave everything and serve as a breakfast for the codfish. You cannot argue that away, Zaida, friend that you are. This is the end of us. We shall never see the shore again."

I answered him with a bright word, while the winds above roared as though a thousand spirits mocked the sea and the sky, and the flood-gates of all iniquity were opened. Never has mortal man, I do believe, sailed through such a tempest or witnessed so terrible a manifestation of Nature. But for the officers who navigated the ship, none but myself dared venture on the poop, and I had the heart for it but rarely. It was as though ocean and sky had commingled and eternal night descended upon us. The blast beat upon our hull like a mighty hammer falling from the sky. The sails had been torn to ribbons. We rose up upon vast eminences of water, until we appeared about to cleave the heavens whence the lightning rained upon us; we sank again into pits of foam and darkness, while the thunder of sounds crashed in our ears; vision was lost to us; we seemed to be amid the wildest carnival of death and

evil spirits. And yet this fearful tempest was but a small part of our peril, as you shall learn presently. Our enemies were men rather than the ocean.

Now, the violence of the storm abated when we were beyond the banks of Newfoundland, and fine, sunny days succeeded to it. All the Frenchmen aboard came on deck and aired themselves in their gay clothes —a pretty sight, though there were no women to see it. Every one was in the proudest spirits, thinking of his home and kindred, and, perhaps, of the applause he would win in Paris. None talked with greater confidence than the Marquis de Lafayette, and, if I had the laugh of him for his changed demeanour, I could rejoice no less at a happier confidence.

"Here's a fine breakfast for the codfish," said I; "here's a meal for sharks. Why, sir, I must tell it to madame, to be sure, and the babe shall hear of it when she is old enough. The victor of Barren Hill under the bedclothes for a puff of wind! And the poor devils of codfish going empty after all! 'Tis a right down affront to good appetite."

"The sea and I never will be friends," said he very frankly, in rejoinder; "no woman is weaker over the water. I would willingly die and end my troubles when the sickness comes upon me. Had you thrown me overboard my last word would have been one of gratitude. Such is the distress to which a disordered brain can reduce us—for I doubt not,

Zaida, that it is the brain which plagues us, though we place our trouble elsewhere. 'Tis a kind of tipsiness which has this merit, that a man is better for it afterward. Here am I this morning ready to dance for joy of the sun, and all aboard the ship no less ready, I'll be bound."

"All free men—there's not much dancing will be done by the English prisoners, Marquis."

His face became grave at this, and I perceived he was not a little concerned. Against my good advice and his own, Captain Landais had taken seventy English prisoners aboard at Boston, and these men were now confined between decks; a pitiful sight enough, and one I could never behold without regret. We were to send the unhappy men to a French prison upon our arrival; and the miseries of the voyage were to them but harbingers of greater misfortunes. The kindly heart of such a man as M. de Lafayette could not but be touched by any reference to this shadow which attended his own happiness.

"I had forgotten the English prisoners," said he very sadly; "the storm must have dealt hardly with those poor fellows. Is it true that you have been much among them?"

"Not a day has passed that I have not visited them—when the ship and the sea let me."

"And do you find them very bitter toward us?"

"They ask chiefly for ale and rum. To judge by their songs they are men going to the nether regions.

But that's the English view of your country always. They believe you will send them to the galleys. I've told them 'no' and done what I could. There's one great lion of a man that would be worth a squadron of dragoons anywhere ashore. Britain is fortunate in her sailors, sir. I count it a privilege to do what little is within my powers for such men as these."

"And that is a resolution worthy of you. I shall make it my business in Paris to beg the King's clemency for them. We must not forget, at the same time, that their very courage makes them dangerous."

"They would slit our throats and think no more of it than skinning an eel, Marquis. Much as I love them, I would sooner see them in irons than in silken hose any day. Your French friends are overmuch given to confidence, and the captain has no more sense than a walrus, which he greatly resembles, be it known."

"You have expressed your sense of the danger to him?"

"I have told him that he isn't fit to comb a nigger's hair."

He smiled at this and bade me continue vigilant.

"I shall suffer no uneasiness while you have the matter in hand," said he, in his kindly way, "and yet I am convinced that our early apprehensions were just, and that we did wrong to take these men aboard. Keep an eye upon them, Zaida. Do not forget that we have called you 'Master Prudence.'"

I gave him my promise in all earnestness, and when our dinner had been eaten I went below, according to my custom, to pay a visit to the English prisoners. They were confined 'tween decks in an airy place enough; and, though it was over small for such a considerable number of them, I had no complaints upon that score. For the most part they lay in their hammocks—an advantage to men who had irons upon their legs—and I found much cheerfulness among them, for they would regard me as of English blood, and not, as one of them said, very forcibly, "a —— Frenchman." A finer body of brave fellows you would not have met anywhere, and one of them, my lion-hearted rascal, whom they called "Hairy Jacob," I loved as a brother. To him, indeed, I carried daily, as to some of the others, a mess from our own cabin; and if not that, then tobacco or rum, for which latter these English crave with an intolerable longing. On this occasion, I remember, my little present was no less than a leg of a fowl, to which Captain Landais had helped me but a few minutes before; and this with honest bread and good potatoes (these being still left to us) I smuggled to his hammock, and bade him eat it so that none of the others could see.

"But five hundred miles from France, Jacob, and good news upon that," said I. "Here is the Marquis de Lafayette to intercede with the French King for you when we go ashore."

"Oh, to perdition with that," says he, for in speech I found him as violent as his kind; "we want nothing from no rascally French King."

"Maybe," said I, "he will send you to England, and there you will need nothing. If that is so, it will be the Marquis's work."

"A fine brat of a boy, a man-eating nipper—truth all. I could lay him across my knee and make him sing. He's honest oak; but I'll tell you what—I'd wring the necks of those French fighting-cocks who make faces at us through the hatches for less than a noggin of rum. Look here, lad, I like the cut of your jib, and Hairy Jacob is more than what he seems. Some nights you lie in your hammock and some nights you don't. You keep abed, fair weather or foul. That's what's spoke between us. In bed, says I, and Hairy Jacob a-dreaming of you. Now, clear off while I get this game-cock inside of me—and, lad, a drop of spirits would go down wonderful well with it. Remember that when you're saying your prayers at nights. And be off afore they find us together."

I paid little heed to this talk at the moment; and, not wishing to cause remark, I went among the others, giving a little tobacco here, bread there, and such luxuries as I had been able to snatch from the cabin table. The men were sullen and rarely thanked me. I could not but reflect as I gazed upon their fierce countenances, observed their strength, and re-

membered that they were Britishers—I could not, I say, but reflect how desperate a situation we should be in if chance gave them but an hour's liberty and weapons came to their hands. Here they were, seventy of them in this dark hole, with their unkempt heads above the hammocks and their eyes shining like cat's eyes in the dim light, resembling so many wild beasts caged for man's delight, desperate men and British sailors withal; and Heaven help us, said I, if they break loose. This, however, remained my secret thought, and, returning to the huge fellow's bed, I put on the best air I could and promised him that the cabin-boy should bring him a tot of rum when next the watch was changed. Such an act, well meant and kindly, saved the lives of all the Frenchmen aboard the frigate *Alliance*.

I say I promised him the rum, and he, rolling about in his hammock, threw a rough blanket from him as he lifted himself up to thank me. His bed had been slung immediately below a porthole. I perceived, as he shifted his body, a brace of pistols and, more wonderful than this, a common tin pannikin upon the back of which some one had scrawled with a blunt instrument the rude shape of three ship's bells. This, God knowst why, unless it were in His mercy, flashed before my eyes but for an instant and was as speedily covered up, both the pannikin and the pistols. But such a black look passed across the fellow's face, he cast upon me such a vindictive, searching glance, that

I believe, had I been less self-possessed or unaccustomed to situations in which men's lives are at stake, he would have blown my brains out there and then.

"Why do you look at a man so for?" he asked. "Is Hairy Jacob to be shown at a fair for his beauty?"

"Well," said I, "there's one that will go some way to shake hands with a British sailor any day, and that man is by way of being Zaida Kay of Philadelphia."

The reply appeased him; I believe I had won my way to such kindlier feelings as he possessed.

"None of your blarney," said he, in a tone that was half sullen, half good-natured, "and mind the nipper comes along with the rum, or, by thunder, I'll cut his ears off."

I said that I would send it down when the watch was changed, not wishing to appear in any way dismayed; and, taking advantage of the opportunity, I quitted the cabin and returned to M. de Lafayette. In my own mind there remained no doubt whatever that an attempt would be made upon our lives this night, and that nothing but a miracle could save our throats from the knives of these desperate men.

## CHAPTER XV

### WE PREPARE FOR THE MUTINEERS

General Lafayette walked upon the quarter-deck with the Chevalier de Pontgibaud as I came up—the latter a wild young Frenchman, who had escaped from the prison of Pierre-en-Cize to join the volunteers in America. I approached them with what carelessness the circumstances would permit me, and joined for a few brief moments in their talk of Paris and what they would do when good fortune set them ashore again. The sea about the ship showed hardly a ruffle upon its sunny waters; there was no more than a breath of wind singing in the rigging above us. On all sides you heard laughter and merry voices. The uniforms of the officers would not have disgraced King Louis' Court. And yet how great a mockery it was! The heavy secret I carried told me that not one of these men might be alive when the day dawned to-morrow.

A full hour passed before an opportunity came to me. The most part of the Frenchmen were dicing and drinking in the cabin by that time. I argued that, if any spy had watched me from the fo'c's'le, my manner must have sufficiently deceived him by now. And so I spoke to General Lafayette.

"We have papers to write in the cabin," said I, in such a tone of voice that I arrested his attention instantly.

He looked at me sharply.

"Papers?" says he.

"And red ink will be spilled if we do not take care of the bottle."

"Shall we take a dish of tea together?" he asked me, loud enough for all to hear.

I shrugged my shoulders, pointing to the placid sea, and appeared to follow him reluctantly. But no sooner were we in his cabin than I shut the door close, and, standing with my back to it, I told him in twenty words what had happened.

"They have pistols in their beds, and they draw three bells upon a pannikin. Do you make anything of that, Marquis, or is it my foolishness in imagining that our lives are in peril this night?"

Well, all the world knows how brave a man he was. He appeared to be quite unmoved by my intelligence.

"At three bells. Would that be in the morning watch, do you think?"

I knew no more than he did.

"Reason would say so; and yet, who will vouch for it? If it's the dog-watch, they may be upon us any minute you care to name. Look how well they've thought it out—writing on a pannikin and passing it round the beds so that none should hear them."

"We have our arms," says he.

"Being fifteen against seventy—and seventy man-of-war's men at that."

"Friend Zaida, there are Frenchmen here who will not reckon up the numbers. Let us bring them together without a moment's loss of time."

"Marquis," said I, "this is your first thought, but the second will be better. Do you suppose these men could get arms in their hands if there were no traitors among the crew? Call your people together if you will. This I promise you, that if they come they must bring their swords naked to their hands."

He assented to that.

"You have the prudence of an old man, and yet are little more than a boy," said he. "I confess that I am speaking very wildly. Be plain with me, and tell me all that is in your mind."

I did so without preface.

"Let your friends know one by one that they are to keep their pistols primed and their swords ready. Let none sleep this night if he would wake again. There is more in my head, but I fear to tell it. Go to the cabin, General, and carry with you all the assurance you can. And if you should pass by Surgeon du Plessis as you go, say that I would have a word with him. I know not if I be mad or sane—the morn will tell me, if I live to see it."

"I shall fulfil your instructions faithfully and ask no more questions," said he; and with that he left me,

and I heard his steps upon the companion as he went to join his friends.

Minutes, flying minutes, and so much to do in them that my very heart sank within me at the prospect. When Surgeon du Plessis entered the cabin my tale so affrighted him that I thought he would have swooned upon the instant. Unlike M. de Lafayette, here was a man ready to raise his hands to Heaven and let the Englishmen slay him where he stood.

"I fear death greatly; I cannot die, Mr. Kay!" he cried; and then, very pitifully, he bewailed the day that carried him out of France and the folly which had put these men upon the ship. To all of which I listened with what patience I could command.

"There is one chance for us," said I, "and you are the man that is the master of it. I have a friend among the prisoners, if friendship be some concern to keep me out the way when this blow is struck. This villain is now waiting in his hammock for the rum I promised him. I say that he shall have it; and more, there shall be rum for every one of the seventy as quickly as hands can carry it down. Now, that is my part while yours, surgeon——"

I hushed my voice, and, stepping across the cabin, I whispered something in his ear which brought him to his senses in a moment.

"I could tell you in five minutes," says he, when I had done; "if it be so, we shall owe our lives to you this night. But, Mr. Kay, if I have it not——"

"In that case we shall swim in the Atlantic Ocean together before the new day dawns. Be off with you, surgeon, and do my bidding. Why, this very minute may find them creeping out of the cabin upon us."

He waited no more, but took himself off like a man with a bayonet at his back; while I went on deck and called the ship's lad, Johnny Bolt, to come and speak with me. This bright youngster I would have trusted with all the lives in Philadelphia; and his quick wits, his monstrous love of an adventure were in such fine contrast with the surgeon's cowardice that I could have kissed him on both cheeks while he spoke to me.

"Johnny," said I, "will you have a pretty gold piece to spend in the port of Brest when we be come ashore?"

"Why, yes, sir," says he, "if I can be picking one up when the porpoises are aboard."

I patted him on the shoulder and drew him toward the bulwarks.

"Here's that same great porpoise beside you, Johnny, with the golden louis, which is French money, in his pocket. You are going to help carry rum to the 'tween decks just now. Shall I tell you what they carry with their rum in England, Johnny? 'Twill surprise you, surely!"

He looked at me, as well he might have done, very much perplexed.

"General Washington's taken to blue breeches," says he, meaning "You have the laugh of me."

I passed it by, and, stooping a little to speak into his ear, I told him something that set his young eyes staring from his head.

"And, Johnny," said I, "if a boy's clever hands cannot lash a rope across a door, just so high that a man in a hurry would fall headlong, why who, then, can do it at all?"

He thought upon it an instant as serious as a judge.

"I want no guinea for that," cried he, almost with a man's dignity; "your rope's there already. And, sir," he asked, almost pitifully, "may I carry a pistol to my hand?"

"One of my very own, Johnny. Remember, 'tis you who will save the lives of honest men upon this ship; you alone, boy, and all America shall hear of it. Now run away while I speak to the surgeon—and, Johnny, you may come to my cabin when the rum is served out, and you shall find a pistol there."

He went off like a flash and left me alone at the foot of the ladder by which you reach the poop. It was now eight bells of the afternoon watch, and the men came tumbling up briskly enough for the first dog-watch to follow. I had promised the great villain, known as Hairy Jacob, that he should have his rum at four o'clock, and this promise must now be redeemed. But you may imagine my situation, still waiting there for Surgeon du Plessis' news, and afraid to move a step until I had it. For all that I knew

to the contrary, the English prisoners might already have changed their plan and prepared a new one. I walked the deck half believing that a horrid cry from below would shatter my poor dreams upon the instant, and bring these black-hearted ruffians headlong upon us. When the surgeon came at last, I could have hugged him for the joy of it.

"Well, will it do?"

"Mr. Kay," says he, "I'm very doubtful. Such as I have is but little, and may not serve our purpose. We must trust in God and our own good courage."

"Amen to that. Have you brought the stuff with you?"

"In this flask," says he, pulling his cloak a little way aside.

"Then come with me," cried I, "and the purser shall do the rest."

We descended the companion together. It would then have been about half-past four. I could hear our captain talking loudly in the cabin; "and talk on," said I, "for these may be your last words."

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PISTOL-SHOT

THERE is much good-humour in a comparatively small measure of rum, and I was in no way surprised at the outbreak among the English prisoners which attended the fulfilment of my promise to them. No sooner had the spirit been carried down than they burst out into riotous songs and ribald talk, chiefly insulting to the French nation, its King, its country, and its ships. There was one silly song in particular which I have never forgotten, though but a single verse of it remains in my memory. It appeared to concern a famous sailor by the name of Jerry Bones, and his exploits in the last great war which England fought with France, wherein he lost his head.

This childish nonsense, I say, they sang with much vigour when the rum went down to them, and long afterward; and so great was the uproar, so loud and overbearing their talk, that I began to doubt the wisdom of our course, and to think we had done better to have let them go wanting altogether. But my chief concern was to prevent the Marquis and the Frenchmen falling upon them there and then, for that would have undone us utterly.

I pressed this point upon him again and again,

and yet I believe that he was but half convinced, being, as all Frenchmen are, much given to the rash assault, the wild charge upon the enemy, and the lightning-flash of a clever sword. In the end, however, he consented to leave the affair in my hands; and the darkness having now fallen some time—for this was the month of February—we went down to supper and met our comrades. Such a gathering about a table set for food there never will be again in all the world, I think. One by one, into the dim light cast by the crazy cabin lamp the soldiers came, and as each sat to the table he drew his naked sword from his cloak and laid it with his pistols on the table before him. It still wanted a full hour to the time when we expected the first attack to be made. Nevertheless, I bear witness that no man ate an honest mouthful of food or could have eaten it for a King's ransom. Drink we had in abundance—claret from France which the Count d'Estaing had sent us for the voyage, claret and strong waters enough; and I saw to my shame that some of these young fellows were not unwilling to get their courage from the bottle, and in the bottle to drown their just apprehensions.

And who could blame them if they did? In my own heart I knew that but one chance lay between us and the cruel death the prisoners had designed for us. The surgeon had told me that my faith was vain; we were but fifteen dandy officers against seventy British sailors. What success, then, could we hope for

against them? Nay, I was as silent as the others, and with them I lifted my glass to the crazy toasts. Such suspense, such minutes of waiting were beyond all measure unendurable, and I had begun to believe that it could no longer be supported when, all unexpectedly and terrible to hear, a pistol-shot rang out from the deck above, and fifteen men leaped to their feet as one, to begin a night of terror for good or ill, as our destiny would write it.

Now, no sooner had the pistol been fired than the men round about me seized upon their arms, and crying out loudly that they had been betrayed they said this and not three bells was the appointed hour. I perceived in a moment that it would be of no avail to reason with them, and catching up my own pistols, I ran out upon the deck, and there stumbled heavily over the body of a man that lay at the head of the companion. So dark was the night that I could not recognise the man nor be sure whether he were dead or alive; but almost in the same instant that I discovered him there came up to me none other than the boy, Johnny Bolt, and to my utter astonishment I perceived that he held my pistol still smoking in his hand.

"I saw him fastening the doors, sir," he faltered; "he's the nigger, Esau, and he's been watching you since sundown, sir; I did not mean to kill him."

"Johnny," said I, "that shall be the best thing you ever did, if you live for a hundred years. Had

he bolted the door against us we were undone surely. Now keep away from what is to follow—good lad, go where the madmen cannot find you."

I said no more, for the others were all about me now searching the decks with keen glances, and ready to fire their pistols at any shadow. Save two or three of our own hands, who had run aft upon hearing the shot, not a man stood near the poop. There were heads thrust out of the fo'c's'le asking what the matter was; but before any man could answer there came such a devilish sound from the decks below (where the prisoners should have been confined) that a very child might have told you what had happened.

"Cutting each other's throats, by all that's wonderful," cried I; and then to M. de Lafayette—"I withdraw my words, General. Fall upon them when you will, and luck go with us."

Many voices replied to me, saying that indeed it was so, and never will I see such an instantaneous change in men's demeanour or in the way they carried themselves. Instantly now these fine gentlemen of France were cock-a-hoop, some dancing in their very glee, some thrusting others aside to be first in the fray, but all as mad for the prisoners as lads for a game. The first that got to the place was the Chevalier de Pontgibaud, I remember, but he had not taken more than one look below than he drew back shuddering and his face shot white all over like a sheet.

"Good God!" he exclaimed. "It's a shambles,

gentlemen. I would not go below for a thousand louis."

I pushed him aside and looked down to the 'tween decks, wherein, as ever, a few dim lanterns gave light enough for the sentries to watch their prisoners. The horrid shriek of voices surpassed all knowledge. I saw men clothed in rags, naked men, dead men, sleeping men—and yet that which awed me more than these was the flashing of knives and cutlasses, hacking wretched creatures to death as they slept in their beds; this and the figures of some already gone and lying prone where the waking trampled them down. Beyond all doubt the call had been given to these poor folk to fall upon us. They had not answered, and their angry mates had spoken of treachery and fallen upon them. Two men on the ship knew why the sleepers had not awakened; but the truth be my witness that neither the surgeon nor I had imagined that this pit of horror could be opened by our act.

"There will not be a man of them alive in ten minutes," said I, drawing back from the place with eyes which were shut for very dread; "we must go down amongst them, gentlemen. Our plain duty bids us go—all except M de Lafayette, whose place is here."

Against this, however, the Marquis protested hotly, and before I could even lay a hand upon his arm he had leaped down the ladder and rushed in amongst them. To follow him headlong was the work of an

instant; I raced with him for very shame; and, coming pell-mell upon the scene together, we implored the prisoners to hear reason or to take the consequence of their folly.

Now, I say that we took them by surprise, yet this is but a manner of speaking. It could have been no surprise to them that such an outrage, deeds so violent, and blood shed so recklessly should have brought us from our cabin—nevertheless, the sound of our voices in the place rang out so clear above the fray that every man stood stock-still at the summons, and for an instant you heard nothing but the groans of the wounded and the heavy breathing of the dying. Their obedience in no way deceived me. I perceived the prisoners—such as had fight still in them—glowering together at the forward end of the cabin, while the huge villain, Hairy Jacob, stood almost head and shoulders above them and had already named himself their leader. It was plain that submission lay far from their thoughts, and that the truce would be of the briefest. I welcomed it in so far as it permitted our comrades to join us, and standing close with our party—even Surgeon du Plessis bringing himself to the place (and such, I believe, is the highest courage in man that he shall brave his own fears)—standing close, I say, M. de Lafayette spoke a fair word to them and had their answer in return.

"Men," said he, and his dignity has not been sur-

passed by any that I know of, "you have done a wicked thing this night, and the guilty must suffer for it. If you hope for any mercy when I am come to my own country, lay down your arms and submit to the captain of this ship. I will give you one minute to decide," says he, "one minute and no more. And upon my honour, if you do not instantly obey me I will kill you where you stand. Now come forward and answer me."

They replied with derision that they would lay down their arms for no —— Frenchman; and upon this, very simply, as seamen will, the fellow Jacob made complaint of us.

"Where's that rat of a surgeon what doctored poor sailormen's rum? Oh, you may talk, curse you—we'd have slit your windpipes quick enough, fair give and take between us. Now, this I do say—you swear your affydavy to put us off at an English port, and we're lambs forthwith. Do that and feed us right, and this ship's going home. But say you're agen it, and Heaven help you. That's my word to all of you but the surgeon. As there's a sky above me, I'll roast him alive if he comes into my hands—and so will my mates. Eh, mates, you'll do for that surgeon?" he cried, addressing the others.

In their turn they roared horrid defiance of poor Du Plessis, and I saw the sweat trickling like rain from his forehead.

"Think nothing of it," I whispered to him; "stand

by me and I'll answer for you." And I added, slyly, "There was laudanum in the bottle after all, and a pity it did not go round," for it had been my idea to doctor the men's rum and so to catch them sleeping when they had sore need of wakefulness. He, however, could not reply to me, so greatly did their threats affright him; and not wishing to dwell upon it I turned again to hear the General's rejoinder to the men.

"You are a very impudent fellow," says he to the man called Jacob. "I have yet to hear the reason why you shall not hang at the yard-arm. As for the others, my advice to them is to lay down their arms without delay. I said a minute, and am a man of my word. Now, who will show the good example?"

He looked quickly down the serried ranks of faces but none answered him. I perceived that the truce was up, but did not imagine the way of it. Suddenly from the press, a knife came hurtling through the air; and so deadly sure had been the owner's aim that the blade caught poor Du Plessis full above the heart and killed him on the spot. Thereupon, in a single instant, the men came at us, as many of them as could stand upon their legs, and we were at once in the press of as bitter a fight as ever a ship's walls witnessed.

Let me picture to you that dark place, with an arched roof of stout oaken beams, lanterns swinging from above, and upon either side hammocks which

showed, by here and there, the ghastly faces of men who had been stabbed in their sleep or were stupid with the drug. At the far end of this hole, near the fo'c's'le, stood the British sailors in a body together; we ourselves were almost amidships, and we presented to them a phalanx of the cleverest swords in France. As to our numbers (for I had never counted Du Plessis among the fighting men), we were still fifteen, perhaps to their five-and-forty. But for the surgeon's death, they might have parleyed yet awhile; but when he fell, such prudence as they had hitherto commanded deserted them immediately, and rushing upon us they tried to carry the day by sheer brutality of force. Weapons indeed they had, but as I learned afterward, no powder for their pistols, save here and there; and in the main they relied upon the knives and marline-spikes taken from the deck. There was even one among them that had got an iron ladle from the galley and tried to beat out brains with the bowl of it. Such insensate recklessness, such horrid oaths they were guilty of, that I would sooner have faced wild beasts in the desert—and yet I could not but admire their bravery, and envied the nation which had learned to discipline them. As an avalanche sweeping before a storm they fell upon us; knives slashing at us, their great brawny arms bared to the elbow, their contempt for death or wounds most amazing. And we on our part, standing all together, met them at the sword's point, and fully against our

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will we drove our blades through the first of them to the very hilt.

It is a woful thing to slay a man who is but half armed against your point, a brave man and one fighting for his liberty. No Frenchman among us, I make sure, but carried a heavy heart as he lunged at the bare breasts before him and heard the shrieks of the dying follow upon the thrust. We fought silently with quick breath and feet stamping upon the boards. The prisoners were more like raving madmen, and as for the fellow, Hairy Jacob, he felled poor Count Maudit at a blow which no hammer could have bettered. High above the press, roaring drunken threats, this man made a path for himself through our ranks and got at the doors behind us. If it did not immediately occur to me why he acted thus, I set it down to the fact that I would not quit M. de Lafayette's side, but thrust for thrust with him I beat the prisoners off. Presently, however, there were others who got between us and the doors, and then the big fellow shouted "About ship!" and immediately those who were nearer to the fo'c's'le made a dash for the deck above, and we were left with our dripping swords in our hands.

Now did it come back to me, as the memory of a dream comes in waking hours, that I had bethought me of this very possibility, when the surgeon and I talked together; and, observing my comrades' hesitation, their perplexity and doubt, I called to them to

follow me; and so, in a way, pursued by the man Jacob and such of his fellows as had got behind us, I ran toward the fo'c's'le.

"Turn about and beat them off." I cried back to the Chevalier de Pontgibaud, meaning that some should keep the villain Jacob off; "We have them in a trap—there is a rope across the ladder. This way, messieurs, for your lives."

They did not comprehend my meaning, but men in battle will ever follow him who has the voice to command them; and so it befell that, while the Chevalier and M. de Lafayette beat off the English behind us, I found myself with, it may be seven of our company at the foot of the forward ladder, and there, all together in one great press, we discovered the raging prisoners fighting for the upper deck like very cannibals for meat. Just as I perceived might be the case, so had it happened. Johnny Bolt, faithful to my instructions, had stretched a rope across the double doors at the height of a foot from the ground, and, stretching it, had caught this horrid crew in a net, wherein they lay at our mercy, to be slain or spared at our discretion.

What should we do with them? Could we thrust at their bodies as they fought each other about the lowest rung of the ladder? Must we murder them thus in cold blood? Our very advantage awed us, and though I myself felled the first of them that got his feet upon the rungs, I did not dare to strike a

second blow. Plainly, they would get to the decks if we showed them any mercy, and yet not one of us would cut them down. In this perplexity a new surprise, coming upon us in a flash, seemed a very miracle from Heaven. For what should it be but that our own sailors, standing at the ladder's head, directly they perceived how it went with the prisoners, began to pour water through the hatch above, and, passing their buckets from hand to hand, down came a sousing stream, splashing upon the living and the dead, blinding the madmen and choking their cries. Here in all truth was an enemy they had not looked for—an enemy against whom neither their oaths nor their weapons availed. I beheld them rinsing the water from their eyes, wringing their streaming hair, or raising their arms in impotent fury against that pitiless cataract which fell relentlessly upon them. They were so near to liberty and possession of the ship, yet so very far away; and never, I believe, did so simple a stratagem achieve so much. One by one the prisoners reeled back into the cabin and sank down before us. Even the villain, Hairy Jacob, had no longer the heart to encourage them.

"Why," cries he at last, "done by a waterspout, so help me thunder!"

"You never spoke a truer word," said I, and stretching out my hand I took from him the marlinespike he carried. He surrendered it without a word.

"Let Captain Landais send down all the irons he

has aboard," I cried to M. de Lafayette. And from man to man the word was echoed until a cheer from the sailors above told us that they had it. Of the prisoners, none had a reply to this, nor did any make a move. As ever when mutiny is afoot, they knew they were beaten; and no promise whatever would have rallied them for the second time. Silently they slunk to their hammocks and hitched them up where the ropes were broken. When our smith appeared with his hammers, and men followed him with handcuffs and irons, wrists and ankles were offered to the gyves without anger or remark. Seventy to begin with, there were but forty-eight of these unhappy men who had not considerable wounds to show—and fifteen of them lay stone-dead, either in the cabin or about the ladder's foot. These we committed to the deep with all reverence, and, our own sailors going heartily to the work of swabbing the 'tween decks, we ourselves attended to such of the wounded as would suffer assistance. Midnight had already come before this task was accomplished; and at one bell of the middle watch I walked the deck with M. de Lafayette and gave him what account I could of my comrades and their hurts.

"Noailles has a shoulder as black as a cloud," said I, "but no bones appear to be broken. Baudrix got a bullet across his forehead—about the only one they fired, I think; he's a lucky man to be alive. They trampled on the Chevalier (meaning Pontgibaud),

but that young man has the skin of an eel. The plain truth is that naked arms and iron bars are no good against steel, Marquis. We were lucky in that they never got near us; but this I do say, that if there had been a dozen loaded pistols among them not a man of us would be here to tell the tale. That's the British seaman every day. Give him a clear head to show him what to do, and he is the finest fighter in the world. But his fists can't beat down a wall of swords—and there you have our story. And we shall come to France for all your dream," I added, seeing how heavily the burden of the night lay upon him.

"We shall come to France—yes; but poor Du Plessis," he rejoined, answering me more as one musing than in direct speech.

Herein it was evident that he charged himself in some way with our poor surgeon's death; nor did any right reason avail to put such a thought away from him.

"Honour to a brave man," I said. "Peace to his soul. He was greatly afraid of death, and yet he went down amongst these men. I hold such to be the highest kind of courage. Let it be told of him in France that he died like a Frenchman."

I doubt if he heard me. His thoughts were already in his own home, which became dearer to his memory with every league we sailed.

"He had a wife and child, Zaida," says he very

sadly, and then turning from me he buried his face in his hands, and I heard him sobbing aloud.

"My little girl! my little daughter!" he exclaimed, and I knew that he was thinking of his own dead babe, whom he had left to go to America.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE BEGGAR UPON THE HIGH ROAD

It has not been my purpose in these memoirs to write the life-story of the Marquis de Lafayette; nor have I the desire to do so. History has given a full account of the great services he rendered to America during the war; and to history will the student look for a more faithful picture of his feats of arms and the fame they won him. I speak of a private and dear friendship, and of those scenes and events (unforgettable by me) which attended it. None the less, there must be moments in these pages where my own story intrudes, both for a better understanding of my friend and a truer knowledge of those events in which we took part together. Let me, then, for a brief while, dwell upon my return to Paris in the year 1779 and relate in what manner I was detained there and came subsequently to visit England.

Now, you have heard how we circumvented the plot which the English prisoners contrived during the voyage of the frigate *Alliance* from Boston town to our own port of Brest. Being come to Paris in safety, the Marquis de Lafayette was everywhere received with the greatest rejoicing, Queen Marie Antoinette in particular paying him great honour. We visited many houses, eating and drinking as we went, and

everywhere preaching those doctrines of equality so fashionable in French society at that time—and destined to cost French society so much in years to come. Our purpose had been to beg men and money for the American cause, and we got both abundantly.

Such distinctions as were conferred upon M. de Lafayette fell in some part also upon me. Nor could I forbear a certain pride in my new condition—clad in lace and finery, the friend of French nobles, and yet as much plain Zaida Kay as ever I was in all my life. This, however I kept to myself; and I continued in the belief that I should speedily return to America until there came a letter from our Congress, appointing me to the Agency in Paris and commanding my services for some time to come.

"Here's a pretty blow to a man's hopes," said I to the Marquis when I had read it to him; "Zaida Kay to be set at a desk when there are battles to fight and men to feed over yonder. And the peace coming and the liberty of my country to be won by it! Now, surely could I cry out upon Fortune and name her a scurvy jade."

He did not share my view, pointing out to me that my discretion and business habits must be of great service to my country in Paris—and, moreover, he promised to write me by his own hands all that I would wish to know both of my people and of their fortunes. Happy in the love of his dear wife and

consoled in some way for the loss of his beloved Henriette by the daughter born to him in his absence, he nevertheless returned to America unflinchingly at the bidding of his conscience—and the very next I heard of him was an account of his heroic conduct at the battle of Yorktown and of that dashing charge upon the British redoubts which did not a little to win victory for our arms.

"There was," he wrote, "a great dispute between the Baron de Viomenil and a certain officer by the name of Lafayette upon the merits of the Grenadiers and Americans, as to which were the better troops to pit against the British redoubts. When the rockets went up, as a signal for the attack, we raced for the British lines together; but Colonel Hamilton was first over with my ragged fellows, and never did shabby clothes win a finer victory. Believe me, my dear Zaida, this is the end of all your troubles, and that great cause for which we have all sacrificed so much must now be finally triumphant."

In this he was not deceived. The British Army under Cornwallis, caught in a trap at the mouth of the James River, immediately surrendered, as all the world knows, to General Washington, and thereafter the British had no place in America. The truce between these two great countries did not come for some months afterward; we had no recognition of our Independence from London until the year 1783; but the war was done with at Yorktown, and there-

after the Marquis de Lafayette need think upon no country but his own.

That I did not meet him when he returned to Paris for the second time was the accident of my absence in London upon the business of our Agency. I went to that great city very willingly, for I have always entertained a warm regard for the British people and have made many friends among them. Now that the war was over, I could remember that this great land had been the mother of my own, giving us such qualities of bravery, prudence, and manly faith as we possessed—and I found in the city of London much that I had already learned to esteem in the city of New York. This, however, is no part of my story. I would rather speak of the day when, riding out of London again, upon the road to Dover, an incident befell me which changed in a twinkling the purpose of my life and wrote upon my page a line so black that neither tears nor love may blot it out to my life's end.

I left London upon a sunny day of June in the year 1788. There was none with me save a lad by the name of Philip Ker, mounted upon a brave pony. Dangerous as we had been led to believe the high road, we passed through Rochester without adventure and came safely to the town of Canterbury. Here I purposed to stay the night, that I might see the great cathedral wherein so many English princes are buried. The beauty of this splendid church, its

noble choir, and the remote antiquity of which it speaks, reminded me very forcibly that I came from a new country, which had neither lady-chapels to boast of nor knights in armour to bury therein. In some measure my pride suffered from the circumstance, though I had the wit to prophesy in what way we might, time being granted us, make good these deficiences. Indeed, this beautiful old city, with its kindly people (very ready to hear me talk of the war), its sleepy clergymen, and hallowed dead, won upon my homage as no other place in Europe had done; and I lingered there three days, in spite of my previous determination to stay but one. So did Fate play with me; so was it destined.

There is a beautiful winding, wooded road lying between Dover and Canterbury, with much fine heath by the way, and a keen air, invigorating above the ordinary. I had been cautioned at the inn that it would be wiser to make a party for the journey, if that were possible; but this, to a man who had led a pioneer's life across the seas, sounded but an idle warning; "and," said I to my host, "that will be a sorry day for the rogue who lays a hand upon Zaida Kay, and little would he get for his pains." In answer the good fellow shrugged his shoulders and bade us beware particularly of a villain named Black Robin; but we set out, nevertheless, in the best of humours, and had ridden it may be five miles contentedly before we passed even a single chaise.

"And so much for your Black Robin redbreast," said I to the lad Philip at my side. "These poor folk hereabouts would douk the head if a man but whistled a May song at them. Let me see the hand that will rest upon my bridle and I will buy you a suit of homespun. Why, lad, at Barren Hill I had a matter of twenty Indians atop of me and as many tomahawks at my throat. Do you think they put fear into these young bones. Aye, you should have been there and then you could have spoken."

Be it observed that I overnumbered the Indians somewhat; but who has learned to speak of war with moderation, or to humble himself concerning his own part therein. We have all a touch of the vanities within us, and I find, in the matter of numbers, that they grow with the years. This lad, however, had but a poor ear for marvels, and I found him as little given to worship me as before.

"Truth, sir," said he, "you must have lost flesh if there were twenty Indians atop of you at Barren Hill—just such another as my uncle that had two cannon-balls at him at the Battle of Minden, and would not let the surgeon remove them, for he had the mind to show them to my aunt at Richmond. I make sure you would frighten any highwayman if you did but look at him—and, come now, here's one to try your hand upon."

"The saints help him," cried I, whipping a pistol from my holster, and as quickly thrusting it back

again. For it was but a young woman who stood out in the high road before us, and she, I doubted not, had come there to beg of us.

"Well, my good girl," I cried—and then, the words faltering upon my tongue, I looked at her as though I had seen one risen from the dead.

"Sir," she said, speaking with an accent which plainly told her to be of French birth, "for the love of Heaven, hear me. You must hear me, sir. There is a gentleman in dire peril in yonder wood—oh, sir, he needs help so sorely, and I am but a woman, and I know not what to do. Sir, if you be a Christian and have any mercy, you will answer me and come—for I was gently born as you are, though now I be but an outcast from the world."

"Then surely has a merciful Father sent me to your succour," cried I, "for you are Pauline Beauvallet, and the last time I saw you 'twas as a child in the stables at St. Jean de Luz."

She stepped from me, and her great black eyes were as two beautiful jewels upon a virgin's face. Her poor clothes worn threadbare; the stain of the grass, which had been her bed, upon her raiment; wan and thin and pale, none the less was it the Pauline Beauvallet of my dreams—she whom I had thought upon so tenderly in the lonely hours, even beneath the stars which shone upon a battlefield or smiled upon me from the zenith of the great Atlantic Ocean. Pauline Beauvallet! and here in England, seemingly

an outcast, lifting her trembling white hands to Zaida Kay, who would have knelt and worshipped her!

"Oh, blessed Virgin!" she cried, again and again; "blessed Virgin!" And then, "how I remember that day you speak of—the dragoons upon the road, and my little pony! It was the day of my father's death," she said, but with such an infinite sorrow in her voice that she brought tears to my eyes.

"Take me to your friend, Pauline," I said, not wishing her to see how greatly I had been moved by her story; "this meeting certainly has been destined by the Almighty. It would be the man named Le Brun that is hurt?" I put it to her.

"Yes, yes," she cried, running on before me into the thicket, "the only friend that I ever knew; Gaspard le Brun, my father's steward, who took me out of France to save me from harm. He is here, in the wood, monsieur. They followed him from France, Armand de Sevigny, my father's murderer, and his servants. Oh, if I were a man to answer that!"

I made no rejoinder, but went with her as swiftly as might be to the place where her friend lay. Few as her words had been, they told me her story plainly enough. Armand de Sevigny, who had killed her father, the Count of Beauvallet, must have loved this child from the beginning, I thought—perchance the duel had been fought upon the question of her marriage. And the Count being dead, Sevigny had persisted in his desires, believing that little Pauline must

readily become his prey; which I make sure had been the case but for the honest fellow I had last seen upon the road to the Spanish frontier. In a twinkling I understood that these villains had followed Pauline and her protector to England and had discovered their opportunity upon this lonely road. When at last I came with her to the place, I perceived that my guess had been a good one; and then I understood both how she had escaped her persecutors and how it came to be that Le Brun still lived.

He lay in a little clearing of the thicket near by a pretty brook, with a sycamore's leaves to shield him from the sun and a pillow of wild flowers for his head. Twenty paces from him, maybe, a Frenchman in fine clothes had fallen stone-dead, and, rolling as he fell, his face now rested in the waters of the brook, while his broken sword glittered upon the shining pebbles. Yet a little farther on a second, as still as he, bore witness to a stirring fight; nay, for that I had but to look at Le Brun's sword, smeared to the very hilt for a witness. Grown very old since I had last seen him riding down toward St. Jean de Luz, the poor fellow's clothes were as worn as little Pauline's, and I could well picture the bitter days of poverty they had lived through together in this strange land, driven thereto by a powerful noble and a society which esteemed a woman's honour so lightly. But these were my own thoughts, and kneeling by the wounded man I remembered his necessity and put them from me.

"Comrade," I said, "here is Zaida Kay, who went to America with the Marquis de Lafayette ten good years ago. Look up and say what hurt you have. Nay, surely the dragoons from Bayonne are not so soon forgotten? Look up, comrade, for here is a friend at hand."

He was sore hurt—there could be no doubt of it. I put my flask to his lips and had but a whisper of thanks for his answer. When I told him my name and reminded him that we had met upon the road to Spain ten good years ago he pressed my hand and bent his head, as though he remembered perfectly and was grateful for my coming. His wound I judged to be dangerous, and my small knowledge of surgery would have it that a pistol-ball had entered one of his lungs and remained lodged in his body. Against this I could do nothing, except it were to stanch the bleeding and bid the lad Philip hurry to the nearest inn for a coach or any conveyance that might be got. Willing enough, though greatly affrighted, the youth went with all speed, while little Pauline, upon the verge of tears told me more fully than it had yet been possible to do how he came by his hurt and what was the history of it.

"We have been three years in England trying to earn our bread," she began, with rapid utterance and quick, nervous gestures which I liked but little to see. "M. le Brun kept the Salle d'Armes in St. James's Street; I taught the children to speak French. It

was well while there was war, but afterward our patrons left us and we suffered much. Then we went to the other great towns; we worked so hard, and thought of our beautiful France so often. But Gaspard would not return while Armand de Sevigny was in Paris, for the King is his friend, and you know, sir, there was that happened between us which he could never forget. How shall I tell you? Three years ago upon the Place du Temple, they followed me from the theatre and tried to drag me into their carriage; but I had Gaspard's poniard beneath my cloak, and I was not such a child that I could not save myself from that. Afterward we came to London, but Sevigny had not forgotten us. Oh, such humiliations we suffered, such wrongs, until they told us that King Louis had banished the old Marquis to his estates, and that the son, Armand, must leave Paris with him. Then we determined to go back. No land could be more unkind than this England, with its proud people and its dark skies, and no laughter anywhere. So we were to return to Paris—but, sir, Armand de Sevigny had not gone to Bayonne. No; he had come to England, and he followed us, and here in this wood I saw him again. And, oh, Mr. Kay, they have killed Gaspard; and he was the only friend I had in all the world!"

I listened to this bitter story of wrong with such feelings as true compassion rarely fails to provoke. How little had I foreseen what this child must suffer

when I had recalled her name in distant America! Neither General Lafayette nor myself, remembering her prettiness at St. Jean de Luz, and speaking of it often with much tenderness, had once bethought us of the Marquis de Sevigny's son, who had killed her father; nor had we known of his passion for her. It became clear to me, also, that poor Le Brun's pride had forbidden him to seek of Mme. de Lafayette that pecuniary assistance the Marquis would have so readily offered him. None the less, the story cut me to the heart; and being unwilling to dwell upon it, and too distressed to press her further, I perceived with relief that the lad Philip had returned, and so I went to him and asked for his news.

"They have but a cart at the inn," said he, "and that is gone to the village of Ramsgate. There is a farmer who would have brought a waggon, but he will be long a-coming. And so I have made bold to stop a coach on my own account, and it stands now at the thicket's edge awaiting us."

"You stopped a coach, lad!" I exclaimed, in amazement; "nay, whose coach is that, then?"

"I know not, sir; but since you put a pistol in my holster, what use should I make of it, if it be not to stop a coach when I have the mind to? And, sir, if you do not be quick, the driver will be up from the ditch, where I had the forethought to detain him."

We laughed together at the drollery of it; but,

remembering poor Le Brun's need, I lifted him in my arms and carried him instantly through the wood. As the lad boasted, so had he done. A coach stood upon the high road; we caught its driver in the very act of clambering from the ditch, and to him I promised a guinea if he would convey my unhappy burden to the nearest inn. At which he became restored immediately, for he had believed himself to be in the hands of the highwayman, Black Robin.

"You be a fine gentleman enough and I be in the ditch," said he. "Well, there's a party of French coveys waiting for me hereabouts, and good luck go with 'em. Your humble servant, gents, and next time you meet old Bob Wiggett, you show him the guinea first and the pistol afterward."

I promised him to do so, my heart beating fast the while. For what did his words mean if not that, by no inconceivable accident, we had stumbled upon Armand de Sevigny's coach, and that the man and his fellows were still waiting in the neighbourhood to finish the foul deed they had begun so well? Nay, I had hardly set poor Le Brun upon the cushions and bidden Pauline Beauvallet step up beside him, when the old man cried out, "Why, there's one of 'em behind the bush," and sure enough, standing half concealed at the thicket's edge, I perceived a slim Frenchman with a naked sword in his hand.

"How many were there that fell upon him, child? How many in the wood?" I asked Pauline.

She could not remember rightly, but, at a hazard, thought they had been six.

"I saw M. de Sevigny a little way off upon a black horse," she rejoined. "They fell upon us suddenly from the thicket; we could not afford horses, Mr. Kay, and were going afoot. Then they cried out that it was Gaspard le Brun they had to do with, and two fled from us and there were two he killed. You know how men have been afraid of him. Even in Paris he had no master at the fence. But he was one against three, when a great coach came up the hill and M. de Sevigny called to them to forbear. They ran from us at that and Gaspard fell, and I hid my face for I knew that he was hurt—and, Mr. Kay, he is the only friend I ever had."

Her eyes dimmed again at the memory of her friend's distress, but I had learned all I wished to hear, and, shutting the door upon them, I bade the coachman drive on. Of the six Frenchmen in the thicket no more than two were hurt. We had Armand de Sevigny and four others still to deal with, it always being supposed that there were not more of his company waiting in the nearest village!

And there was but this brave lad, Philip Ker, to stand by me when the time should come. For I had no doubt that they watched us as we rode away, and presently would cross swords with us.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PARSON INGOLSBY

THE inn lay farther from the thicket than I had imagined it to be. We crossed a wild, bleak down with a gibbet at the heart of it and a man's body swaying to and fro in a little breeze that came in from the sea. A lone house which, at a distance, I had taken to be a hostel proved to be nothing more than a shed for cows. Thereafter for some miles this unfriendly heath persisted, so open, so black that I could well understand the stories of rapine and murder to which it had given birth. That we had been followed from the wood I never had a doubt. The hedgeless road, the winding, chalky track gave no shelter to the dark forms of the horsemen who were plainly to be perceived at every turn, three or four of them together, neither advancing with courage nor drawing back with discretion. Their hesitation I welcomed, since thereby we obtained minutes of grace most precious to us. In the village, I said, if a village there were, we might come to the reckoning.

I knew little of our situation, neither the name of the heath we crossed nor of any place of note in its vicinity. When a church spire appeared above some

of the melancholy trees, the lad told me that we were approaching the hamlet of Barham and might look for some protection there, "since," said he, "they have a constable." To laugh at his boyish confidence in this worthy official were easy enough; but I forbore alike from that and from any answer to his encomiums upon the parson of the place, who, he told me had no rival in Kent in his judgment of horse or hound, or a bottle of Spanish wine. The village should speak for itself, as it did presently when we entered it at all speed, and coming to the door of a thatched inn, white-fronted and very English, I dismounted from my horse and told the landlord my business.

"Your best room and the bed prepared instantly for a gentleman who has come by an accident in the wood," I said; "we may lie here some days. Do that which is necessary, and the items of your bill shall not be questioned."

A tall man, long in the weasand, with eyes that looked into each other and a tuft of lank, chestnut hair upon an egg-shaped head, the fellow smiled sourly while I spoke and answered with little thanks.

"The very words I heard at this door not the half of an hour ago. Ye be all for the best bedroom; and yon's the second gentleman that got his trouble in the wood—but some of you speak French, sir, and others, I doubt not, know where Black Robin is perched. Well, I'm no constable, thank goodness; it's not my

business to stop a man's windpipe so long as good ale can trickle down it. Bring your gentleman within; I'll do what I can for him."

I think that he must have perceived my astonishment when he spoke of those in his house who had the French tongue. It needed no good guess to say that some of Sevigny's men were there before us—perhaps the man himself, waiting for the tidings which should reach him from the thicket. To enter the house meant that we must come face to face with this desperate gang which had pursued the child and her protector so doggedly through these long years. To proceed would be to invite attack upon a more lonely road, where neither men nor house might witness our predicament. I chose the former course without a moment's hesitation, and, entering the house boldly, who should I stumble upon at the very threshold but Armand de Sevigny himself in the act of climbing the staircase before me?

You can never mistake a nobleman of France, his bearing his dress, or his manner. This fellow's coat must have cost a little fortune to trim; his sword had a golden hilt; he carried that fine, unmistakable air of a man who could say to all the world, "My father is the Marquis de Sevigny."

Hearing me upon his heels he turned and bowed very graciously, and we were still face to face, like two women that would know each other's business, when the stablemen, at my bidding, began to carry

poor Le Brun up the stairs, and the whole story flashed out in a twinkle.

"What nonsense is this?" he cried angrily; "why have you brought that ruffian to the house?"

"For the very same reason that brings black crows to a field together," said I; "and as for your ruffian, there are men here who have an answer to the word and know where to place it."

I looked him straight in the face, and he stepped back at my keen glance. That the situation could not have been more perilous both to the child and myself I was perfectly well aware. An open door at the stair's head showed me the legs of three or four serving-men, listening, I did not doubt, to every word their master spoke. Behind us, upon the high road, were others in Sevigny's pay—the coach stood at the door; a bold man, I said, would have called his fellows out, picked up the child in his arms, and raced for Dover and the sea. A bold man, yes; but was Armand de Sevigny a bold man? For boldness, mind you, is as much a matter of wit as courage. And this man had little wit, or he would have grasped the circumstances as I grasped them and not drawn back to think upon it. Therein he found me a shrewder antagonist; for I was up the stairs and at the open door even before he could whip his sword from its scabbard.

"Gentlemen," I exclaimed, standing upon the threshold of the room and speaking to them rapidly

in French, "if you do not desire a better acquaintance with the King's dragoons from Canterbury, there is the window and yonder lies the high road to Dover town. I speak as one recently come from Paris and not unfriendly to your nation. They have a short way in this country with those who marry other men's daughters against their will—and I would remind you that we have just passed by a gibbet, which the justices might find a convenience to their hands. Now choose your path quickly, and go or stay as you please. You will have precious little chance of coming to a decision at all if you bide here longer."

They stared at me agape in astonishment. Who was I? Whence had I come? Why should I be at the pains of warning them? And, for the matter of that, young Armand de Sevigny could have been scarcely less perplexed than they. Here was a stranger speaking his own tongue, not to be accused of any apparent motive in warning his men, and yet seemingly desirous both for their safety and that of the poor fellow they had brought so near to death.

Possibly he was half ready to believe my story that there were dragoons upon the road behind us; but, however it might have been, he stood there in doubt and perplexity until the servants would have carried poor Le Brun by him. Then all his hate and fury mastered him in a twinkling; and, whipping out his sword from its scabbard, he made to thrust it through that helpless body and settle his monstrous score for

good and all. Just one terrified scream I heard from little Pauline; just for one instant did I witness the servants' horror-stricken faces and their brave attempt to shield their burden from the steel—then, with a blow that, had it fallen fairly, would have killed the rogue upon the instant, I shot out my clenched fist crash upon his forehead, and he went headlong down the stairs, over and over like a child's ball, bouncing from step to step, now against the wall, now almost bursting the balustrade, until the flags received him, and he lay like one dead across the threshold he had but just quitted.

I say that I struck him with all my force, and yet, angry as I was and almost beside myself at the cowardly act he had intended, I, none the less, kept my wit alive and bethought me of the consequences of the designed blow. Behind me were the hired ruffians in the room they had bespoken. Their astonishment and debate at my warning could not be so great as to prevent their coming to Sevigny's aid when they understood how it went with him. None in the inn yard would lift a hand to save me from these fellows or those others now racing down the road from Canterbury. It behoved me, therefore, to settle with Armand de Sevigny once and for ever, and to settle with him while none could come between us.

To this intent, quick as light, I slammed to the door of the room wherein Sevigny's fellows stood, and turned the key which my quick eye had detected

when first I came there. And no sooner had this been done than I leapt down the stairs, and calling to the serving-men to make way for me, drew my sword as I went. No fear had I that Sevigny was dead. There are few that a blow from the fist will kill when it is not fairly struck; and this man lay but winded by the stroke. To drag him up, to push him into the village street before me, was child's work for a man whose limbs had been shaped in the grim schools of war. And I had a temper which would have pitted me against a dozen such as he at such a time. Was it not for Pauline Beauvallet's sake, and could I forget that day upon the road in Spain when M. de Lafayette's liberty, perhaps his very life, had been the price of her courage?

"Up with you, my fine cock-robin," I cried to him as we reeled and struggled together; "let's hear how you whistle at men, you who have such a pretty throat for women. Here's one ready to answer for bringing your ruffian to the house." This I said driving him before me to the path of green grass at the inn door. And at every taunt I kicked him with my foot, for I saw that he was but a craven after all, and would not face me save it were under provocation.

"What! This proud lapdog has too much milk in him to yap!" I went on, seeing his teeth all shut up like a boy's when they whip him, and a look in his eyes which named him a base coward. "Oh, here's a tale to tell in Paris; here's something for the Trianon

and the petticoats there! A Frenchman who had his ears boxed, and asked for it to be done again! Nay, sir, I swear if you do not fall to upon the instant, I will duck you in yonder fountain, and lose no time in doing it, moreover."

He replied to this, not by any word to me, but by calling over his shoulder to his fellows in the room that they should come down and stand by him. As for the village of Barham itself, never was such commotion in its single street. From every cottage, from the fields near by, from the blacksmith's forge, and the better houses, maids and men came swarming out, some bawling for the constable, some imploring us to desist, many beseeching that Parson Ingolsby should be sent for. These shouts fell upon ears that cared nothing for them. I had Sevigny at my sword's point, and our blades were engaged at last. If I had gone to that affray in heat, I continued it with the clear brain of a man who perceives that his adversary is more skilled than he, and that nothing but prudence will save him from death. Yes, truly he was a great swordsman, this dandy from Southern France, and had it not been for the blow I struck him upon the stairs, for that and his rage against me, he had killed me at the second pass. Anger, however, had robbed him of his steadiness; I parried his thrusts upon a blade which an iron wrist had been schooled to govern. Time and chance must be my opportunity —and yet, God knows, when some minutes had passed

and he had begun to master himself and my own skill seemed the poorer for that I did truly believe that he would kill me and that my end must be there before the inn door of a Kentish village.

The fear of death comes to us in many shapes, but most to be dreaded is such a death as a man must die who would avenge a bitter wrong and is to fall by a villain's blade when all right and justice should claim his life. Not so much a dread of death itself, but of that which this man's victory would mean to Pauline Beauvallet, chiefly distracted me and helped to rob my arm of its cunning as I stood before Armand de Sevigny that day. For let him pass his sword through my body and what then? The child must go to France with him. She would come to his possession beyond hope or chance of redemption. And men would name me but a fool thus to die for sentiment. This I could not help but remember while the man pressed me more hardly and the clamour about us droned away to a whisper, and the villagers held their tongues for excitement of the issue. In the room above the hired ruffians beat upon the door as though to bring the roof of the inn about their ears. A brisk sound of galloping drummed in my ears even while steel clashed upon steel and my adversary's point quivered against my shoulder. I knew that those whom we had left in the thicket would not long delay their coming, and yet it would have been madness to take account of them, or to abate one jot or tittle of

my purpose. That iron wrist of mine must save me if I were to be saved. Again and again its muscles stiffened at a mad attack; the man cut over and under, engaged and disengaged, came at me with the cry of a Red Indian, or riposted with the lightning touch of a *maître d'armes;* and still the good wrist saved me. I knew not before, the truth be my witness, that I had such skill with the sword, or could have made such a brave show as then I made when more than my own life must be the price of defeat and a young girl's fate lay trembling in the balance. Twice, indeed, he touched me lightly; I felt a trickle of blood upon my forearm and a sharp, burning pain about my shoulder; but each time that he touched me my riposte made him sing; and one of his assaults had such a mad turn, and showed him in such a strange contortion of limb and body, that I laid his face open from the chin to the ear, and cared not a fig whether the stroke were foul or fair.

Aye, but what of that? Were not his rogues approaching upon the high road, and those others within the house beating down the door with savage cries? Even the villagers perceived my predicament, and called upon me earnestly to make an end of it. The maids at the window, whose white-frilled caps flashed upon my vision at every turn, screamed together when they heard the horsemen. There were fierce oaths from the hulking labourers and coarse jests from those who had to do with the horses. All these I heard

as distinctly as a man hears a whisper in a lonely gallery; but I turned my head for none of them. This man before me—my anger against him fed upon his very impetuosity. If at first I had been all cool and self-collected, the desire to kill him now began to possess me like a fever. I cared nothing for my own life, for the blue sky above me, or my home across the seas; nothing for any promise of to-morrow or love of yesterday, but only for his flesh warm upon my blade, his blood upon the grass, his sightless eyes rewarding me at my feet. And so, perchance, I began to observe no more pity than he; and the very wickedness of desire foiling me, I cast discretion to the winds and met him with his own heedlessness, thrust and lunge, cut here, cut there, yet caring nothing for the cuts; and so bearing myself that a desire to live seemed to find no place in that mad encounter.

He had me sure enough; all my knowledge of swordsmanship told me that. Inch by inch he was forcing me back, and I must stumble headlong into the inn presently or bare my breast to his furious stroke. And he was no longer alone. With a shout of ringing triumph, a clatter of swords, horses neighing and women shrieking, his fellows from Canterbury were upon us. Those within the house had burst the door and were all tumbling down the stairs together like dogs let suddenly from a kennel. There could be but brief moments now until they

would be at me from behind; while before me were the burning eyes, the flushed cheeks of this man I would have killed. What then, kept his steel from my heart? The long-drawn instant of suspense when I seemed to number the seconds to myself, saying, "It will be now, or now," was surely as awful as any man has lived through. He had me. I was helpless before him; and then, miracles of miracles, he lay senseless upon the ground and a great shout rang in my ears. I heard laughter, oaths, and, above all, a fine sounding voice which bade men stay their hands in the King's name, and then shouted to some one to "pick up the velvet man and put him in the water-trough." And still I knew nothing of it, save that Pauline Beauvallet's arms were about my neck and her kisses warm upon my lips.

"Who is it—who has come between us?" I asked them wildly.

A great voice answered me. "Why, who should it be but Parson Ingolsby and his good oaken cudgel? Think you he'll have brawling in Barham village? Zounds, man! he'd put him under the pump were he the French King himself."

I stared at the speaker as though he had risen from the dead—a seaman, as it appeared, who wore a pigtail and a broad-brimmed hat, and rode an uncouth horse clumsily enough. There were fifteen more of his kind, on horses no better than his own, halted round about us; and amid them stood the

merriest little parson man that ever I have met in all my travels—bald as an egg-shell, sprightly upon his legs, here, there, and everywhere in a jiffy.

"Tell me," cried I to them, amazed, "how did it come about; why did yonder man go down before me?"

"Aye," said one of them, "that's no long tale. The parson threw his cudgel at him. Many a good man has known the thickness of it when he bided too long in the ale-house. Me and my mates are preventive men from Deal. We'll have no lousy Frenchmen swilling claret in Barham village. But I'll tell you what, sir: you'd have been dead and gone to glory if the parson had dined with the squire last night, and that's as true as Scripture. Jest you give thanks that he got no port wine in him yesterday. 'Tis a plague upon a man's eyesight, surely."

I made some answer to him, but have no recollection of my words. Little Pauline still held close to me; Sevigny's rogues were galloping back to Canterbury as fast as tired horses could take them; the others from the room above scattered like frightened birds and were not pursued. A wench bathed the Frenchman's head at the fountain and mocked him the while. But as for me, I was dumb before that Providence which had given me back my life when I thought it surely to be lost, and had sent me this day to the help of one whose need no just man might refuse.

## CHAPTER XIX

### WHITE WINGS

It would have been in the month of May, I think, nearly a year after my life had been so miraculously preserved in Barham village, that I went down one afternoon from my house in Sandwich town and gazed over the still bay for the ship that was to bring General Lafayette to me. Alone and full of my thoughts, both sweet and sad, I seated myself upon a little hillock of the sand and dwelt upon that sunny picture which can have no fellow in all the world. The noble ships of England lay anchored in the Downs before me, and the white sails of others were as great birds upon that far horizon, beyond which lay France and the land that henceforth should be my home.

Eleven months since I had met Pauline Beauvallet upon the road to Dover town; eleven months since the merriest rogue of a parson that ever stood upon two legs (and there be some that rightly should go on four) saved me from Armand de Sevigny's blade and my own rash act. Shall it be a wonder to me if people ask what kept me in England when my life's work lay across the ocean; or how I come to speak of a house in Sandwich and wherefore I looked for

General Lafayette in a ship upon the seas? Not so, and a word shall answer them.

Now, it was all the rascal of a parson's doing. How the fellow would listen to my stories of the war! What a very army of honest bottles we sent empty away while the tales were told! Press me further and I will declare that the parson stood not alone in it. For had not he a little arbour in his garden, and did not honeysuckle and wild roses grow thereon; and what should such an arbour be for if not to catch the whispers of a young girl's voice and to give them back, in words the years should remember, to the man who had learned to believe them the sweetest music in all the world? Aye, call it the parson's doing, and a fig for the fate or destiny or any name by which men excuse their fortunes. I rested awhile at Barham Vicarage because the parson would have it that I should. I bought me a house at Sandwich because I had no mind to return to France. And that's the whole truth of it and shall stand without excuse. So find me at the water's edge looking wistfully at the little packet boat which a mocking wind left becalmed in the bay, while I could have cried out with impatience to see and hear my friend.

Now the little ship came drifting into the river at last, and I ran to the water's edge and espied General Lafayette heavily wrapped in a military cloak and standing alone by the helmsman. Always a man who

learned to govern his emotions, he did but smile at me kindly from the ship's deck; but no sooner was he ashore than we embraced most cordially in the French fashion, and he began at once to speak of all those things of which my letters had made mention.

"So this is my old friend Zaida Kay, and a woman has trapped him at last! And she is a Frenchwoman! And oh, my friend," he cried, "but I told them all the while that it would be Honor Grimshaw, and you have shamed me sorely, and what shall I say when they charge me with it?"

His words cut me not a little, but I had reckoned up all that in the secret chamber of my heart; and to him I could speak intimately of it as to a dear friend who had learned to love me.

"The name of Honor Grimshaw is sacred to me as that of my own sister," said I. "I will not deny that circumstance at one time promised to make us man and wife. General, a great wrong would have been done had that been so. I loved her, but not with the love a man should have for but one woman in all the world. Consider how it has been with me. For eleven months now this love for Pauline has been growing in my heart. I wake in the morning rejoicing that I shall hear her voice again; I sleep at night fearful lest the shadows shall creep upon her happiness. She is all that I can believe the truest woman to be. Sir, I love her as I do not believe any man has ever loved a woman before, or will love after me."

He smiled, but not unkindly, at my warmth.

"I do perceive that Honor Grimshaw has no part in this," he rejoined, "and, my dear friend, who am I to dispute with a lover—at least until he be married a year?" he added slyly. "Mlle. Pauline is well born; I owe her much; your country, perhaps, owes her something in that she helped me to get to America. And, dear Zaida," he exclaimed, with sudden warmth, "am I so little your friend that I, too, cannot rejoice at this and creep into your home for a little share of all this kindly love you do so well to speak of?"

I said no more upon it except to wring his hand and remind him that some one awaited us impatiently at home, and that we must hasten. My little house with the red roses creeping upon its porch and the tangle of wild flowers in its ample garden had been sufficiently described to him in my letters; but he would have discovered it had it not been so, for who should stand in the roadway as we came up but good Parson Ingolsby, and the business which he did there was one no other man could have done so well.

"Yonder's the parson of Barham village," cried I, pointing him out with my cane; "those fellows about him have handled a keg of Schnapps before, as you may readily perceive, General. I doubt not that it is the good man's present to us against to-morrow—and if it has paid a shilling of duty I'm a Dutchman.

For that matter, 'tis little enough that any house hereabouts knows of King George's taxes."

The idea of this shocked the Marquis not a little. A punctilious, methodical, law-abiding man himself, he could not understand with what levity the coast-wise people of Kent broke the King's law and boasted of the misdemeanour. Nor did I, upon that occasion, seek to justify the matter, for the parson's merry face was justification enough; and the good fellows who helped him to carry honest kegs to our cellar had honesty too broadly written upon their sunburnt cheeks for any man to quarrel with them on that score.

"Good luck to you, parson," said I; "and surely the King's dragoons will be riding this way if all that liquor must be drunk up between now and Christmas. Let me present you to General Lafayette. You'll need no introduction to each other, I make sure."

I had but to mention the name to bring a shout to the parson's lips like that of a man halloaing after a fox.

"What!" cried he; "General Lafayette, who fought at Barren Hill?"

"There would not be two of them, parson."

"General Lafayette, who is thrashing the rogues in Paris?"

"Ask him and he'll tell you."

"Then bless the eyes and limbs of him, but I

mean to shake him by the hand. Your servant, sir. I think little of you that you beat us at Barren Hill, but much that you come to my friend's wedding. And, indeed, you have not the build of a fighting man at all," he added, with a candour which amused General Lafayette very much.

"'Tis with the head the General fights, and not with the cudgel," said I; and we were still laughing upon it when some one spoke to us from a window above, and looking up we espied the prettiest pair of black eyes in all England that day. It was a lesson in gallantry to see General Lafayette doff his cornered cap and the parson go bowing until a man might have thought his back would break.

"Mademoiselle," cries the Marquis de Lafayette, in the foolish French fashion, "they did not tell me that stars shone by day in England."

"Observe," says the parson, "the very roses are put to shame."

She laughed at the pair of them, and, laying a sunburnt cheek upon a crimson bud that climbed about her window, she said, "I should have known you anywhere, M. de Lafayette. Please do not tell me how many years it was ago."

To which he replied:

"Centuries, my dear lady, have I been waiting for this opportunity to thank you for that which you did at St. Jean de Luz."

"Aye," chimed in the parson, "so she whipped a

noose about the soldier-man's neck; and here's another ready to-morrow for my friend Zaida Kay. It's pretty plain why she kept him out of a French prison."

"I doubt not," rejoined the Marquis, "that it was very indiscreet of her."

And so they plagued me as folks ever will when a man must wear his heart upon his sleeve for all the world to peck at. Laughing and jesting as lads in the sunshine, we went into my pleasure-garden and there found mademoiselle at the tea-table, and poor Le Brun still stretched upon a couch, in earnest talk beside her (for he had never yet been able to stand upon his feet since Armand de Sevigny's rabble fell upon him in the woods near Canterbury).

"Now," cried I, leading the Marquis up to Pauline, "here are two that do love me truly, and I would have more than a word of jest pass between them. Tell General Lafayette that none more honoured than he will ever cross our threshold"—this I said to her—"and you, General, there is no day in all your life that you remember better than the one which saved you from the dragoons at St. Jean de Luz. Tell so much to Pauline Beauvallet, who to-morrow will be Pauline, but Beauvallet no more."

My little girl turned rosy red at the words, but she advanced with both hands outstretched to greet our friend, and never has an English house shown a man a picture so winsome. This I thought it, be sure, and

I will still hold to it that Pauline Beauvallet's beauty had no match in all the country, nor could the kingdom of France better it. For there was that about her face which spake at once of Italy and of England, of the clear, precious, dazzling skin of the northern women and the richer colouring of the south. Grown a woman in development, her hands and her feet were the smallest imaginable; and she had such a wealth of raven-black hair that I have never seen its match in any country. But perhaps the vitality of her manner, the animation and quick expression of pleasure or of pain in her round, black eyes, attracted men more surely than merely physical gifts. What lay beyond in those vivacious depths whence the child's very soul appeared to shine forth? Who could understand her truly, her courage, the past sorrow of her life, and the ardour of her friendship for those who had taken pity upon her? This mystery of a clever mind, I say, alike charmed and baffled all those who had discovered it. I could speak of it with no more certainty than any other, though to-morrow would make her my wife. The future, perchance, would lay it bare to me. Heaven knows how little I foresaw the terrible future it must be.

So we drank a dish of tea about the little table in my garden, and were merry enough as men should be at such a time, with talk of France and all that passed there, of America and its great free people, and upon that of wedding-bells and much that these

good people of Sandwich had prepared for our delight. When dusk fell and we had carried poor Le Brun to the parlour and little Pauline ran off to her room to be busy with her needle once more, I led the Marquis abroad to show him all that the little town of Sandwich had to boast of, and to speak more intimately of my own plans and of his. That great events were brewing in Paris across the sea his letters told me; but his own share in them, the work he had undertaken and must undertake, interested me greatly, and I heard him speak of it with much gratification.

"France is winning liberty, but must pay the price of it," he said; "I trust the people, though I am well aware that dangerous men would contrive their undoing. In time we shall arrive at such free institutions as you enjoy in this country; but we have much to do before that will be possible. You must come and see me in Paris, Zaida; must come and stay at my house and hear and see these things for yourself."

I told him that I would gladly go, but that I feared upon Pauline's account, lest memory would play havoc with her.

"I have written to America for some new place of credit here in England," I said; "bread and cheese go well enough with kisses, but a good round of beef is convenient sometimes. You know that I am not a rich man, General. What I did in America brought

me no gain—I am content that it should not have done so. If I contemplate a residence in this country it is that I may live so near to France that my wife can visit her old home sometimes. I would not have it be an exile's marriage that she is making; and from England we may readily step over to France and inquire for one by the name of Lafayette."

He shook his head a little slyly at this, and then told me that which he had been itching to say, I make sure, ever since he came off the ship. "Has Mlle. Pauline no fortune, then?" he first asked.

I answered him that her dead father had spent the last penny of it.

"But what of his estates in Touraine?" he exclaimed, turning upon me suddenly.

I shrugged my shoulders.

"Let us speak first of his castles in Spain, General."

"Ho, ho!" cried he; "here's a man that takes a little orphan girl to wife and would let ten thousand gold pieces go begging because his back is too stiff to pick them up."

I still believed him to be jesting, and my pride was hurt that he should persist in it.

"Her dead father spent every penny that he could handle and pledged himself for that which he could not," I said. "If he had any estate in Touraine, 'twas thrown on the green cloth long ago. Let's speak of what is, General, and not of what has never been."

"Miracle of incredulity," cried he, still smiling slyly; "and the Château d'Aulay, wherein her old uncle lived, and the spacious lands thereabouts, and all that fine estate—but I do perceive most plainly that all this talk is nothing to you, and we'll have no more of it. Come, come, old friend, let us discourse upon love and marriage, for such befits the occasion more properly."

He turned about and began to walk down toward the sea-shore rapidly; but he had whetted my curiosity, and half believing, half doubting, but mighty eager to learn the truth, I ran after him, imploring him to take pity upon me.

"I never knew that she had an uncle at all," I remarked at his heels.

"Oh," says he, still walking fast, "if you pressed her hard enough—and I doubt not that you have done that, Zaida—she will make admission of it."

"You deal hardly with me. Is this your love?"

"Nay, how should it be? I am not for the altar to-morrow."

"You speak of ten thousand crowns. How should such a sum be known to you?"

"Perchance I counted them, my Zaida!"

"I'll have no more of it; ten thousand or five, they may go hang for me."

In truth he had angered me overmuch, and I had all the mind to leave him there and then and return to the house; but no sooner did he observe my state

than, drawing my arm through his own, he fell to a slower pace and told me the whole truth of as great and astounding a piece of news as ever I heard fall from his lips.

"Pauline's uncle was the old Chevalier St. Aulay," he said, "a rich man, though prodigiously mean and niggardly. When his sister married that rascal, the Count of Beauvallet, the Chevalier went in mortal fear for his own fortune, and would as soon have had a regiment of dragoons in his house as that fine rake of a Count. Two years ago this sour old man died at Rome, friendless and alone. When you told me how things were going here, I remembered the circumstance and used such influence as I have at Court for the right administration of the estate and the protection of your interests. This is no jest, my Zaida, but the simple truth, that your wife is the mistress of the Château d'Aulay, and that to-morrow will make you its master."

I held my tongue for very wonder of his words. That this good fortune should have come to one I had believed to be without home or kindred; that my dear friend, who had given me so many tokens of his love, should have been the instrument of its recovery, awoke in my heart such diverse emotions that I had no words to express them. He, however, understood my silence, and pressing my hand he reminded me where my duty lay.

"Let us go and tell Mlle. Pauline," he said; "we

have no right to this secret, for it is more properly hers. Let us carry it to her as our wedding gift, Zaida; I am sure we could bring no better."

I went with him readily enough. Darkness had now come down upon the town, and as we walked back we met a little company of seamen who were going to our house to serenade us with a crackle of burning tar-barrels and some very ordinary vocal music, which had reference chiefly to their liking for ale. These good fellows I rewarded with a gift of money; and then, taking Pauline aside, I walked with her a full hour in the moonlight and spoke earnestly of this great future which M. de Lafayette's news had promised us.

"We shall go to France, sweetheart," I said; "there can be no reason now why we should not. This cottage may still be dear to us; and we will visit it sometimes when the sun is shining. But I would not have you an exile from your own country. In Touraine you must live again as you lived when a child. There can be no happiness for me such as would wait upon your content, little Pauline. Are you not all that I have in the world, and is not your love the richest treasure I possess? And who knows," I added, as the thought came to me, "we may even buy back the old house near St. Jean de Luz and ride upon that road together as we did so many years ago."

I spoke with much feeling, believing that the news

would move her greatly, and especially win her gratitude toward General Lafayette. Herein I was disappointed, for she heard me in silence; and when I made mention of St. Jean de Luz she shivered in my arms as though old remembrance must be associated with pain.

"I fear to go to France, Zaida," she exclaimed, with that impulsive honesty inseparable from her character; "something has always told me that I should do well not to go. Say it is a foolish dream of unhappiness, and forgive me. I do not think that I am afraid in a way that you would understand. If the dead can speak to us—and I believe that they can—then I know that my father's voice has a message for me sometimes. He would not wish me to go to my old home, dear Zaida, I have known that always. Of course, it would be different in Touraine, but what friends should we have there, and what could life give us that we have not here? Dear heart, we will thank M. de Lafayette; but you will not take me to France if you love me, Zaida."

This response came as a great surprise to me. I had expected something so different: delight at the prospect of being among her own people again, a recognition of my own aim and intent, and a speedy assent to the proposition. None the less, I think that I understood the nature of the fears which animated her, and that sense of unseen things and voices which had afflicted her so often since her father's death.

A foolish fancy, if you will, which she would be talked out of presently; but to-night a real premonition, and one I must remember to the last hour of my life.

"It shall be as you will, little Pauline," I said; "neither place nor fortune has a meaning for me any longer. I will own no country but that which shelters the woman I love. Let us speak of it in the days to come. To-night I would remember nothing but your love."

And so I took her close in my arms, and to-morrow night, I said, she should sleep upon my heart.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF JULY

I PASSED the month of June following upon my wedding in a visit to London with my dear wife. We were lodged conveniently and well in St. James's Street, but a little distance from the place where poor Le Brun had previously opened his Salle d'Armes. A necessary payment of money falling to me from the American Agency enabled me to show Pauline many of those wonders of the town which poverty had denied to her while she was there with Le Brun. I had influential friends, who readily welcomed me to their homes and introduced me to the houses of others. So the weeks passed pleasantly enough, and nothing astonished me more, when our visit drew toward its conclusion, than my wife's sudden determination to go into France, in flat contradiction to that which she had asked of me at Sandwich.

A woman's caprice, you would say! It was more than that, I think. Such beauty as Nature had bestowed upon this pretty child of France could not fail to win homage wherever it was seen. In London she had a score of beaux about her at once—all paying her their well-turned compliments and trying to flatter one whom flattery had never yet cajoled nor

humbug deceived. Pauline listened to them as one may listen to a player upon the stage, laughing with him, crying with him, but naming him a mummer always.

If London taught her any lesson it was that of her own birthright, of the proud name to which she had been born and the place her forefathers had held at the Court of France. Suddenly, as an idea reborn, there came to her knowledge of that which place and power may signify. She mixed with great folk, visited their houses, heard them in talk. Perchance to herself she said, "These are names of yesterday; mine is a name of five hundred years ago." And what more natural upon this than a recollection of the great tidings General Lafayette had crossed the seas to bring us? A château in France awaiting its mistress, a fine dower to be claimed when she presented herself in Paris for that purpose. This, I say, may have been her reasoning. If it were so she confessed nothing of it to me; but without warning at all, as we returned one night in a coach from the gardens at Ranelagh, she asked me in her own pretty way if I had any recent tidings of General Lafayette and if he still wished us to go to Paris.

"Why, yes," said I, "there have been two couriers with letters from him, and Le Brun has some tidings by a packet boat that came over on Sunday last. He makes much complaint that we leave him alone, but I would not have it otherwise for thrice the sum he

has spoken of. So do not let us speak of it any more."

She laughed and laid her soft cheek against my own.

"Not to St. Jean de Luz, but to Paris whenever you like, Zaida. I have been thinking it over, and I was wrong to be afraid to go. There is no one who will remember me in Paris, but my dear father's house would terrify me. Shall we go soon, Zaida? I long sometimes to see my own country again; these English people mean so well, but they are not clever enough to be kind. Did you hear old Lord Walton telling me to-night that the Prince wished us to go to St. James's? He looked just like some horrid wild animal. I wonder if he has eaten his wife, Zaida?"

"By the looks of her," said I, "he'd have to be a hungry man before that morsel could tempt him. As to our going to France, my dear wife, what I said at Sandwich upon the eve of our marriage I say again to-night. If you fear to go, let your apprehension end the matter for all time. Think how I must reproach myself if any harm befall you because of my persuasion. General Lafayette fears the times, and does not hesitate to say so. We shall do very well in England a year or two, and I doubt not our friend has safeguarded my little girl's interests and will continue in his friendship as long as we choose to command it."

She heard me indifferently, as women ever will who are set upon a purpose. In some measure I think she had become a little ashamed of her previous readiness to be guided by imaginary signs and warnings, which quickly gave place to the impulse of pride which bade her return to France and claim her heritage. However it may have been, we took ship at Margate three days afterward (Le Brun being now sufficiently well to accompany us), and within a week we drove up to the northern gate of Paris and entered in an instant upon those momentous years of our lives of which it is now my sad task to write.

Now, I have told you that General Lafayette sent me news from time to time of strange events happening in France—of unrest and discontent and hunger and poverty; but that which I beheld with my own eyes as we drove through that stricken land surpassed by far anything which the letters had led me to expect. There was hardly a town or village by the way that did not bring us face to face with ragged bands of hungry people—gaunt fellows, wan women, sickly children crying piteously for bread. As for the countryside, it proved a very wilderness: farms deserted, châteaux pillaged and burned, robbers everywhere, unburied dead by the very highway, gibbets as plentiful as apple-trees—such sights as these led a man to ask himself if he were living in a Christian country or a land of assassins and madmen. Had I known but a tenth part of it, I would not have

brought my wife from England for all the gold in the King's palace at Versailles.

We entered Paris upon an unlucky day, the 13th of July, which neither history nor the French people may ever forget. Faithful to my promise to General Lafayette, I would have driven straight to his house, the Hôtel de Noailles; but scarcely had we reached the more open part of the city, when we discovered ourselves in a twinkling amid as fearful a concourse of people as ever I beheld; and from the darkness of ill-lit streets passed at once to a glare as of noonday. Here a thousand torches were held up by a raving, roaring, leaping mob, which brandished every shape and kind of weapon, grasped in fingers made terrible by famine. To this cataract of human voices, the thunder of drums, the blare of trumpets, the rolling echoes of a war-chant were to be added. What it meant, how such a concourse had been permitted in one of the greatest cities of the world, I knew no more than the dead. Our carriage could not turn aside nor would these frenzied monsters permit it to proceed. To have drawn sword upon such people would have been to invite death from a thousand blades. To sit still might have been no less dangerous. I looked at my dear wife and wondered no longer that she had feared to come to France.

"What shall I do? What shall we say to them?" I asked Le Brun as we sat there, impotent and amazed.

This foolish question Pauline herself answered. Her courage was wonderful to see, and in my heart I reverenced it as a thing most precious.

"Tell them that you are an American citizen," she exclaimed; "they will not harm an American. Say that you are M. de Lafayette's friend."

I obeyed her without question. Standing up in the carriage I spoke to those near about and told them that I had come to Paris to visit General Lafayette. But I might just as well have addressed a word to a raging sea. Yells of savage triumph were the madmen's response; the human tide flowed about the carriage like a river at the flood. And yet these monsters made no attempt to attack us, nor did their anger appear directed against our party.

I perceived, upon this, that their fury was engaged elsewhere and that their eyes were turned upward to a roof of a neighbouring house, to the very highest pinnacle of which an old priest clung desperately, while twenty cat-like arms were stretched out to drag him down. What the old man had done, how he had invited the fury of the mob, I could not so much as imagine. The fanatic frenzy of these Parisian people was then too young a thing that a stranger among them should pretend to understand it. If I believed for an instant that the outstretched arms were seeking to drag the abbé back to a place of safety, the more humane supposition was natural enough. Unhappily, it lay as far from the truth as any guess

could have been. Fascinated, unable to turn my eyes away, I stood there and watched that savage murder, the third, as it would appear, in the story of the Revolution. For now a brutal hand had caught the priest's black coat and pulled upon it so tenaciously that the poor fellow released his hold of the pinnacle and slithered down the sloping roof until his head hung over the parapet, and we could see his agonised face looking wildly down, as though to judge where his body would fall and what must be the manner of his death. But the people had no mind to kill him that way.

Little by little they drew him up toward the flat place upon the roof where his exultant executioners had congregated. I saw them pass up a rope through an open window and bend a noose in it swiftly. An agile villain, wearing a red bonnet and the trousers of the common people, sprang lightly to the pinnacle and fixed the cord firmly about the rounded spike of stone above. Far below as we stood, distant from this horrid scene, none the less could I plainly distinguish the doomed man's fearful effort to grip the slippery tiles and keep his hold upon the house; but they thrust their pikes down at him, and, with fiendish malice, lightly, that they might maim but not kill him. In no other land, even the most barbarous, among no other people, however uncivilised, could such a spectacle be found as that I then witnessed with rage almost uncontrollable and a thousand re-

proaches upon my impotence. Let me say, in my own defence, that no rash act, however quick and daring, could have saved the wretched man from his infuriated executioners. Slate by slate the pikes drove him down toward the parapet. If he clung desperately to the gully at the very edge of the abyss, the respite was but for an instant. Again the pikes were thrust down toward him—I heard one fearful cry, averted my eyes, and, looking up again, perceived a body swinging convulsively at the rope's end and knew that the deed was done. "And God be their judge for this night's work," I said.

Women are very quick to guess that a man has something to hide from them. I had shut this dreadful spectacle from my dear wife's eyes, but my agitation I could not hide from her. Seating myself again in the carriage, I told her simply that the people had murdered a priest, and begged her not to look from the window. Happily, when she would have questioned me upon it a new movement upon the rabble's part distracted her attention; and, listening together, we heard one mighty shout, "Lafayette! Lafayette!" Instantly now this seething mob of people began to scatter, helter-skelter—to the right, to the left, headlong as though pursued. No longer was there any glare of torches or cry of "A mort!" A thunder of cavalry at the gallop drowned the people's voices and hushed the more dreadful sounds. I looked from the carriage once more and, to my joy,

unspeakable, beheld General Lafayette himself at the head of a great body of horsemen, and knew that our own peril existed no more.

"Pauline," said I, turning to her, "now you know what this dear friendship means to us."

She answered me by indicating Le Brun's empty seat and asking why he had left the carriage.

But that I could not tell her; nor did I know until the morrow that Le Brun had gone out among the people to save the wretched abbé from the noose, if life yet lingered in that quivering body.

## CHAPTER XXI

### PAULINE DECIDES

I HAD gone into Paris believing that I should spend quiet weeks with General Lafayette and enjoy a precious opportunity of participating in the kindly home life of a man I had learned to love so greatly during his excursions abroad. There was never a greater deception.

It is true that Mme. de Lafayette welcomed us with that gentle courtesy for which the French aristocracy are famed. We were presented to the Marquis's pretty children, and permitted a brief acquaintance with all the transient hopes which animated this truly loyal family. In particular, I remember that stately lady, Mme. de Lafayette's grandmother, the Maréchale de Noailles; her mother, the Duchesse d'Ayen; and her sister, the Vicomtesse de Noailles—three charming and accomplished women who sat at the Marquis's table the first night we arrived, and who were all to perish under the knife of the guillotine when a few short years had run. How little did I foresee this, listening to the fine wit of their talk, their lofty sentiments, and devotion to all that is best in our ideals of womanhood!

Such an introduction to my dear friend's house promised well enough, but the subsequent days belied

it quickly. As all the world now knows, I had ridden into Paris on the day that the old prison of the Bastile fell into the hands of the rabble and was by them utterly destroyed from being a prison any more. The same week found M. de Lafayette called to a formation of a Garde Française, a kind of National Guard in the city for the preservation of order and the King's peace—God save the mark!

From morn to night this indefatigable man was now to and fro betwixt his own house and the great Hôtel de Ville, where the youth of the city enrolled themselves. If I thought him foolish to embark upon such an undertaking I held my tongue about it. There is no dishonour in protesting that General Lafayette did not stand high above other men in those personal weaknesses which vanity puts upon us. I believe that the applause of crowds was dear to him. He liked riding about the city on his splendid horse and hearing the multitude cry, "Vive Lafayette!" This National Guard of his was to save the King and the democracy at a stroke. Vain delusion!—it brought both to the block.

So there he was galloping about the city like a wild dragoon, with a King's writ in his pocket. Left alone with my dear wife, we often walked abroad together and saw some of those strange sights concerning which Europe has had so much to say these later years. Had I given it a name, I would have called Paris at that date a City of Surprises. In many

ways the people's life was just what it had been twenty years ago—great folk abundant, their coaches adorning the finer streets, their houses as distinguished as ever they had been. I saw no shutters in the better quarters closed because of the riots. The churches had good congregations; there were children romping and playing in the public gardens, nursemaids with their white bonnets before the King's palace as ever, theatres by night and good hospitalities by day.

And yet, alas! what turbulent scenes went cheek by jowl with these pictures of a city's daily life! Never for an hour did I feel secure as I walked in the greater *faubourgs* with my little wife by my side. We were abroad the day they killed the statesman Foulon. We saw the mangled remains of his poor son-in-law, Berthier, dragged about the city at a rope's end; and seeing these things the General's platitudes fell oddly upon our ears. Whither was his faith in these monsters leading him? Time alone could declare.

"They have the sword of freedom in their hands, but they do not yet know how to use it," he said, upon the evening of the third day I stayed with him. I answered that it was an oddly-shaped sword, and a two-edged one to boot.

"This afternoon, a little before sundown," said I, "your liberty-loving folk hacked a fine young fellow to pieces with their pikes, and then dragged what was left of his body about the city at a rope's end. They

had previously tied old Foulon up to the lamp-post for the third time."

"Foulon was a madman," he replied; "he told the hungry people to eat hay. I did my best to save him, but a hundred years of hunger and suffering dragged him to the scaffold."

"General," said I, "you fought for liberty in my country, and we can never repay our debt to you. It is my love for you which speaks of prudence here in Paris. There are some nations that wear freedom as a birthright; some that never find it but an ill-fitting garment. You are dealing with passionate men. Here's a tide of anger that may sweep aside all your barriers and flood your city if the wind blows strong enough. Think twice before you embark your boat upon such a river. It may carry you no man can say whither."

"If it carry us to a higher understanding of human needs," he rejoined, "a greater sympathy with those who suffer, and a better knowledge of justice, I am all for the voyage. Little is accomplished without sacrifice. The men who died——"

"And the one that did not die, the poor old Abbé Gregoire, whom Le Brun got down from the house-top at the last gasp, was he necessary to your altar?" I asked him.

But at this he could only shrug his shoulders.

"He led them to believe him hostile to their principles. Discretion is very necessary before an angry

people. When you go into Touraine you will remember that. But I would not have you go—not yet," he said, somewhat earnestly.

I did not respond to him immediately, for my dear wife came into the room at that moment; and who should follow upon her heels but Le Brun, and with him the very priest he had so miraculously snatched from death. Be sure it was a cordial greeting that passed between us. I discovered the abbé to be a man of some fifty years of age, learned, accomplished, and exceedingly kindly. So much, however, had his nerve been shattered by his dreadful experience and the torture he had undergone that even a little sound in the room, a step behind him, or the jarring of a door sent all the blood rushing to his face and his hands trembling.

"I have come to thank you, sir," he said, speaking the English tongue.

I told him he had no more need to thank me than any gaping idler in the crowd who had not lifted a hand to rescue him from death. This, he protested, could not be, since it was from my coach Le Brun had gone up to his assistance—and, changing the subject immediately, he spoke of Touraine and the Château d'Aulay, to which Pauline and I must journey presently.

"You will be very unwise to go down into those parts," he said. "The old Chevalier persecuted the people to the last day of his life, and it is a wonder

" 'I HAVE COME TO THANK YOU, SIR,' HE SAID"

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to me that his house is still standing. I would have you wait awhile, some months at least, until you find the peasants in a better mood. I am the curé of a neighbouring parish, and what I can do shall be done. But, sir, I would never think of taking madame there if I were you."

I was not altogether surprised at this, and, speaking with emphasis, I told him that for my part I would as lief have a cottage in the English county of Kent as all the châteaux and palaces in France.

"When folks welcome you with a naked pike and your gaieties go dancing at the end of a string, those who have coaches do wisely to turn back," said I. "As for going into Touraine under the circumstances you mention, abbé, we would be mad to contemplate it. It has long been in my mind to pay a visit to America, and that I would do but for that foolish notion that I may yet be of service to our good friend the General. He won't hear of it, of course; but the fable says the mouse sharpened his teeth for the lion's sake, and the time may yet be when our friendship shall be more than words. So for the moment I bide in Paris. But yours shall be the first house in Touraine that I visit if ever I go there; so much I promise you with gratitude, abbé."

I turned to Pauline to confirm my resolution and caught a look upon her young face which could not but astonish me exceedingly. The childish prettiness I had loved so well appeared there no longer. Her

lips were close shut; her dark eyes shone with that which might have been scorn of the words I had just spoken.

"Zaida," she said, "my father would have gone to the château, would he not?"

"Is it to say that you would go, Pauline?"

"Oh, come," cries General Lafayette, "we'll have no lovers' quarrel under my roof. The abbé speaks wisdom. Wait until the people are grown accustomed to change. Surely there is gaiety enough in Paris, that you should not be thinking of Touraine already?"

She would not answer us. In our own room that night, when the great house slept and silence had fallen upon that city, she put her white arms about my neck and bade me take her to the château. "My father would wish it," she whispered; "dear Zaida, he spoke to me in the dream. Take me to the château. I am not afraid."

And what could a man who loved her answer to that? Confess that his own cowardice held him back? Nay, not for a hundred lives. Say again it was fear for her? How could he look into those brave eyes and say it? In truth, I promised her as she wished; and yet foreboding lay so heavily upon me that I numbered the watches of the night as one sick unto death, and holding her close in my trembling arms I prayed for safety from the shadows which crept so swiftly upon her young and troubled life.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE HERITAGE

I say that the shadows appeared to creep upon her young life; but what man would have guessed as much when we rode out of the old city of Tours, two short months after I had spoken the word which pledged us to the journey?

For in truth we were a merry party. A stranger passing us might have said, "There goes a couple to the altar and yonder pleasant abbé will have the taste of good liquor upon his tongue to-morrow." The novelty of her situation, the new condition in which we must live henceforth, banished the gloom from my dear wife's face and set her laughing at every little jest. I came as near to living a life beyond my own in happiness and content as ever a man did in all this world. Le Brun alone held his tongue and answered us but wistfully.

"We were safer in Paris," said he.

I had but one rejoinder to this, and it was to remind him what our friend the abbé had suffered in that same city of his desires.

"They put a rope about his neck and tipped him off a roof. That's a pretty road to safety if a man's vertebra be stout enough. We'll fall upon good grass

at the château, Le Brun, and roll where we please afterward. Let those live in Paris who wear iron collars."

"I speak but for madame's sake," he retorted. "These people have long memories. They are likely to keep a place in their recollection for the Chevalier's niece. That is why I say we shall do well to go in among them with our hands upon our swords and our friends at our heels. You are a stranger to Frenchmen, Mr. Kay, and some of them do not desire your good opinion of the race. I have taken it upon me to act in your name, and yonder stand those who will bear witness to my prudence. If you quarrel with me, let them return. But I would speak to madame first and let the last word be with her."

I looked up and made out at a turn in the road where it began to climb an inconsiderable range of hills, some fifteen or sixteen horsemen well mounted and armed abundantly, who appeared to wait for our coming; and, when we came greeted Le Brun very cordially and immediately added themselves to our little company. He told me without loss of words that they had been among the number of his maîtres d'armes both in Paris and London. Some of them, I observed, were well known to Pauline, who gave them an affectionate welcome; though she laughed at poor Le Brun's timidity and declared his prudence untimely. I could see, none the less, that she was not displeased to have so many fine fellows about her;

and we rode on afterward with a feeling of security I had not enjoyed since we quitted England.

So here, then, was the end of the good abbé's warning and of my friend Lafayette's solicitude for us. Seventeen masterly swords upon a narrow, winding road, the château itself but five miles distant, what had we to fear or why should we hesitate? Twenty times I congratulated myself both upon my dear wife's courage and her persistency in this matter. Life at the château might well be a man's life for me, and for her a reward for those long years of poverty and exile she had suffered in France and England. So much I had just said, and was reflecting further upon all the possibilities that fortune might have in store for us, when a loud shout from the servants ahead arrested my attention, and, looking up the hills above us, I discerned the first omen of that long night, and stood aghast at the dreadful spectacle my eyes revealed to me.

A horseman pursued by bloodhounds galloped down a tortuous, narrow road which cut its way between two of the greater hills and thence, winding about above a tremendous chasm, descended to the valley almost as it were by a series of sloping terraces hewn out of the solid rock. Guarded only by a low wall, built of loose stones piled one upon the other, it was plainly to be seen that the horseman had but to draw a rein over-tight at any one of those treacherous corners to be down in an instant, three or four hun-

dred feet, to the very depths of the stony chasm through which we rode.

And from this dreadful fate apparently, there was no escape to be thought of. The savage hounds, baying angrily, followed upon the trail with foam-flecked jaws and mouths agape to fetch the rider down. To them the treacherous winding road was a sure path enough; but the stranger, driven by fear and being compelled to pull his horse back upon his haunches at every corner, lost ground so plainly that his fate must now be but a matter of moments. On our part, we could but gaze awestruck upon the swiftly changing scene. To help the man was impossible. That which overtook him came and went like a flash. One minute I saw him rein back where the road turned sharply, the next a hound leaped up at his horse's throat and, fixing his dripping fangs therein, drove the maddened brute toward the parapet, which crumbled at his touch like a very house of cards. Now they were over for a truth—horse and hound together to the very depths, striking the earth with a blow that froze the blood in the veins of every man that heard it. But the rider remained on the brink of the precipice above. We could see him after a spell, his back against the rock, cutting and slashing at the remaining hound which now attacked him savagely. And then, for the first time there came to us the hope that we might save him.

"Forward!" cried Le Brun, at the moment put-

ting spurs to his horse and galloping wildly up the hillside. "Fifty crowns to the man who is first up!"

"I make it a hundred!" cried I; and following after him, Pauline at my side, the whole company swept up the hill like a squadron of cavalry that has the order to charge.

That was a wild, mad race, to be sure, horse pressing upon horse, man crying to man, the sheer precipice upon our right hands, the vast abyss upon our left. None thought of danger to himself, none reined back where a false step would have sent him down headlong to the black rocks below. My little wife, her eyes blazing, her face hard set, showed the pace to the best of them, and but for Le Brun, who rode a fine English horse, would have been up before them all. Well that such was not to be. For the man was dead when Le Brun found him; and the hound which had torn his throat slunk back to those human hounds above who had dispatched him to this awful work.

We hid the spectacle from my wife's eyes as well as we could; and, grouped upon the narrow road about the body, asked who the unhappy man might be and under what circumstances this brutal vengeance had been taken upon him. When the Abbé Gregoire rode up (and he had lagged far behind us during the gallop) he cried out at once that the poor fellow was his own steward, Andrew Moriot—"and, gentlemen," says he, "if this be not a warning from

the Almighty then have all signs and omens ceased upon earth." To which, I fear me, the rough troopers had but a very worldly answer; and one of them rejoined that if he could meet any of those signs and omens in the flesh he would carve his name upon him in a way he would not soon forget. It was scarcely said when Pauline herself called our attention to a little group of men gathered upon the very summit of the nearest hill; and though they stood, it might be, a hundred feet above us, one of our company fired a musket at them regardless of all consequences, and at this they scattered like a herd of deer and were instantly lost to our sight.

I should have told you that it had been our intention to approach the château as late in the afternoon of the day as reasonably might be, both to avoid the observation of the curious and to be the better able to enter the house secretly, as the abbé desired. So darkness came down upon us as we climbed the hillside, and presently a heavy storm of thunder and lightning added to the difficulties of our way. Through this we rode on eagerly, the lightning showing us the dangers of the path and the thunder frightening our horses to such an extent that we were often within an ace of destruction upon those very rocks to which horse and hound had fallen but a few short minutes before. And not this alone, but the sudden appearance, amid the lightning's glare, of uncouth figures in sheltering woods, some mounted,

some but ragged peasants threatening us with wild gestures, could not fail to inspire apprehension if, indeed, it did not move the weaker among the servants to something akin to terror. These, however, pushed along as rapidly as the others, being in mortal terror of the hidden perils; and when the storm had a little abated and we had climbed the heights by the river, the Château d'Aulay came instantly to our view, and we observed, to our complete amazement, that it blazed with lights from end to end.

"Great God!" cried the abbé; "they have fired the house."

Le Brun answered that their fire burned nothing but good oil and honest candles.

"It's Jourdain's band," he said; "they have sacked half the houses between here and Poictiers these last five weeks. I heard of them at Tours, and sent for what help I could. If we are to save the château, gentlemen, it must be done this instant."

The men replied with one voice that they were ready, and instantly fell to priming their pistols and gathering up their bridle-reins. I looked at little Pauline, an unspoken request upon my tongue that she would stay behind with the abbé and the servants; but there was that in her eyes I had already seen both in Paris and in London, and once having seen could never mistake.

"You wish to go, sweetheart?" I asked her.

"Was there need to ask me that, Zaida?" she ex-

claimed; and spurring her horse forward she led the company into the old park, and we raced across it at a gallop, as jockeys who would win a cup.

Every furlong now showed us the old house more clearly, its wonderful towers and turrets, and its oddly-shaped gables jutting out on every side and often spanning the swift river which cut it in twain. Even from afar it became evident that a considerable number of men ravaged those famous rooms. Many windows took shape of fire as those within roamed from floor to floor, and raised their torches aloft to guide them as they went. Nearer still and we heard their angry voices, roaring defiances and exhorting each other to pillage. In the gardens we encountered the outposts of the horde; timid children watching the lights and fearful to approach; women who had the desire, but not the courage, to plunder. These cursed us as we went by; but we heard them with indifference, and no man drew rein until we were at the very door of the château. Our impatience waxed greater than our prudence—and yet I doubt if prudence would have saved us that night.

My wife was the first up the steps to the château, but Le Brun and I stood at her side almost immediately. No one cared a scudo what became of the good horses which had carried us from Tours. We left them in the courtyard whence they scampered away to the park like a herd of startled deer racing from the voices of men. Not a hand could be spared

to tether them, and the courage of the servants did not carry them so far as the gates we now passed. For that matter I blamed the fellows not at all. Here was a great house full of raging demons, of peasants drunk with wine and desire of revenge. We were but a handful against them, and our only hope lay in coming at them suddenly. If we had stopped to think upon it, I doubt that we had gone in at all. But the fever of the fight was already upon us, and we raced up the steps all together, and were in the great hall amidst the ruffians before a man had time so much as to think of consequences.

And what a scene then came to our astonished eyes! Here, in a hall so vast that it seemed like a church, with painted windows and galleries above and relics of the mediæval age upon the floor below—here, I say, there were some fifty peasants of Touraine shrieking, dancing, drinking; a fearful rabble, dishevelled, with bloodshot eyes; armed, men and women alike, with the oddest weapons that ever raiders carried, and so blind a fury against the house that they even fell upon one another in their efforts to destroy it. But it was not alone the aspect of this raving crew which fired our blood and sent our swords leaping from the scabbard—murder already had been done in the château. From the great gallery which spanned the farther end of the hall, the bodies of three men hung head downwards and swayed horribly upon the ropes which held them. These poor crea-

tures were hacked and cut by the wretches below in a way that no honest man could permit himself to speak of. So dreadful, indeed, was the sight that I would have given all the dead Chevalier's gold could I have dragged my wife from the scene; but just as she had been first upon the steps without, so now did she press on before us, her eyes flashing, her hands clenched as though she alone would bring these assassins to judgment. Had there been need to put heart into us, then this brave girl's courage assuredly had been an example which no man could resist. Of fear, I do believe that the dead Beauvallet's daughter knew nothing.

"Cowards!" she cried. "Assassins! You shall answer me for this." And then, turning to Le Brun, she exclaimed, "Kill them! kill them, Gaspard! Punish them! Make them answer you!"

We had come into the hall hot-footed, but it was not until Pauline spoke this rabble became aware of our presence. A hush fell upon the place—not the hush of coming storm, but that silence a man may feel in a wood where there are wild beasts about him. Desisting for an instant from its occupations, the crew turned its bloodshot eyes upon us and stood aghast at our intrusion. Who were we? Whence had we come? I shall never forget the face of the ruffian who strode forward boldly and answered Pauline's accusation with a horrid threat and an appeal to those about him to fall upon us. So quick

was he, so menacing, that the worst might have befallen but for Le Brun, who shot the man dead at the very instant of his attack, and bidding the others close about him formed a square of blades which twenty such hordes as this could not have withstood.

For remember that here were some of the finest swordsmen in France—men who had earned their bread, since they were little older than children, by teaching that art in which the French have ever excelled. Reflect what a figure these unhappy peasants must cut in such an affray as this. Gaunt wretches thrusting pikes unwieldily, aiming crazy blows at us with adzes or hatchets, many of them armed with nothing better than oaken cudgels—what skill had they to defend themselves or to cut a road to safety? In truth they went down before us like corn before a sickle; and even the brave girl in our midst they could not strike at. Had not Pauline learnt her lesson from honest Le Brun who had been as a father to her? I declare there was no cleverer hand upon the sword that night than my wife's—and this the odder thing, that until she stood beside me, her blade flashing in the garish light, I did not even know that she had ever used a sword at all.

We met them, I say, with a ring of steel, upon which they hurled themselves impotently, and from which they fled shrieking ere the first bout was over. No rats in a trap could have raced helter-skelter as these wretches now ran for liberty. Hurled back

from that rampart of swords they broke and fled, our men after them, from room to room to the very garrets of the house, their cries resounding through the château, their shrieks those of men to whom death was the supreme terror. If we showed them no mercy, spared none save the women, let the murdered men, hanging head downward from the staircase of the hall, be our justification before those who judge us. The assassins had given no quarter and might hope for none. Up and down from gallery to gallery, here crouching in dark corners, there flinging themselves headlong from the windows to the moat below, I saw them crawling upon their hands and knees in abject fear, reeling, dying, thrust through like spitted fowls, their hearts laid bare, their limbs severed—a scene of carnage like to none which even a battlefield has shown me.

Let me make no attempt to excuse or to explain away that which Gaspard Le Brun's veterans did at the Château d'Aulay that night. There is a heat of combat which no wisdom may temper. We rode to this house and found its servants butchered for no crime but that of their fidelity. If the sight moved us to a frenzy of anger who shall accuse us? For my part, I went with the others to the very end of it. The same mad desire to slay that I had known at Barren Hill followed me to the Chevalier's house. When the fever passed and reason returned, the château was as silent as the grave, save for pattering

footsteps in distant corridors, the moan of the night wind beneath the eaves, or the whispers of men afraid to speak aloud.

And this, I said, was Pauline's heritage—this house of blood and death which to-night we held so cheaply, but to-morrow might fail to hold at all.

For who could doubt that the rabble would return, a thousand added to its number, to wreak its vengeance upon those who had dared to decry assassination or refused to bow the knee before this god of rapine which France worshipped so ardently?

## CHAPTER XXIII

### WE DRIVE OUT THE RED-CAPS

We cleared the château of the raiders and closed every gate by which it might be approached. The morning showed us a glorious day of autumn, meadows upon which the sun shone with kindly warmth, and the mellow golden foliage of the splendid park. Not a living being, beyond the number of our own people, appeared in sight. The deer browsed almost at the parapets of the Italian gardens. We heard the music of distant village bells, and from the higher windows could trace the course of the river Loire with boats passing upon it.

I was early abroad with Le Brun, and when we had sent the servants out to catch the truant horses we walked beneath the trees of the great avenue by which the château is approached and asked ourselves, "What next?" Should we remain in this house to make a fortress of it, or return to Paris to admit that we were vanquished? I gave my vote for the latter course unhesitatingly. Le Brun shook his head and reminded me whose daughter Pauline was.

"I feared it from the first," said he; "there is that in the race which nothing will change. Her father would ride twenty miles any day to seek out an

enemy. That's the spirit which carried her into Touraine. She would die before she surrendered this house to a rabble. Had I known that we came to fight the countryside, a King's treasure would not have brought me here. As it is, we must remain, or return to Paris without her."

"An act that my good friend Gaspard Le Brun is very likely to be guilty of," said I jestingly, for in truth his tribute to my little wife's courage could not but be welcome to my ears.

He laughed with me, and I could see that he had as little desire as Pauline herself to seek safety or to turn aside where peril threatened us.

"We can hold the house against them, I do not doubt it," said he; "but Mr. Kay, there must be foraging for food without any loss of time. I am general enough to provide against the worst. If worse become better, at least you will have no quarrel with my prudence."

"So far from it," said I, "that I was about to speak of those very measures. For the day at least it is truce. Let us make what use we can of our opportunities and lose none of the precious hours. Here is madame herself, come to tell us the same story, I'll be bound. Who would think, to look at her, that she carried herself last night like a maître in a salle d'armes? I' faith, she has learned her lesson well and is Beauvallet's daughter indeed."

Pauline still wore the green velvet habit in which

she had ridden to the château, but she carried a whip in her hand in lieu of the rapier she had wielded so cleverly last night, and my first word to her was one upon the exchange.

"We'll need nothing better than that, sweetheart, let's hope," said I, indicating her whip; "here's Gaspard meaning to run away to Paris and leave us alone. Two's company, they say—and one of them hides a rapier in her habit to correct her man when he has a mind to wander. Nay, dear heart, is it not that? Ye bought the rapier for Zaida against the day he would not do your will?"

She lifted her young lips to mine and told me the truth of it.

"I took it from the table in the hall, where it lay as we went through," said she. And then with much tenderness: "Dear Zaida, these things madden me, and I lose my true self in them. It has been so since I was but a child. You will not judge me for them, Zaida?"

I told her that I judged her not at all. If there were some hidden mystery of her life which even my love could not penetrate, I made no complaint of it.

"You do well to wish to be the mistress of your own house," said I; "such is owing to your father's name. Few would show like courage, Pauline; but be sure that the man who loves you will be the last to quarrel with it."

She kissed me for the words; and her vagrant habit

of caution returning to her, she asked Le Brun immediately if anything further had been seen of the raiders. He repeated that not so much as a single Red-Cap had put in an appearance at the château during the morning; and he was going on to speak of the horses when, from a thicket of trees which bordered the Italian garden some furlong from us, a fearful cry, like that of a man in his death agony, burst suddenly upon our ears and held us spellbound. An instant later one of the servants, who had gone in quest of the horses, came staggering out of the copse and fell stark dead in the open, not fifty paces from where we stood.

"God of Heaven!" cried Le Brun, "it's my man, Georges."

"They're in the wood," said I; and scarcely had I uttered the words when the report of a musket rang out and the ball cut the red leaves above us and brought down the broken twigs upon our faces. At this we hesitated no longer, but sheltering Pauline, one upon either side of her, we raced for the house and never checked our steps until we had crossed the moat and drawn the bridge behind us.

Our friends were already at the breakfast-table when we entered the château, but our news brought them quickly to their feet, and instantly there arose that babel of tongues which a scene of danger may inspire. Foremost among these old swordsmen whom Le Brun had gathered about him was the veteran

Gervais of Blois—a fine, grey-haired figure of a man, who had killed as many in fair fight as he had years to his name. He was all for going headlong into the thicket and fetching the rogues out; others were for surrounding it and using our muskets; I alone spoke of fire, and held to my opinion resolutely.

"America can teach you something in this," said I; "fire the copse and have done with it. The rats will run fast enough if you put blazing faggots to their heels. That's my word—clear ground and an open country. Let's see what we are fighting. This red-man's game is none of my fancy."

Well, they jumped to the idea like dogs to a bone. An hour had not passed before a dozen blazing faggots were thrust into the coppice, and its undergrowth fired in as many places. Such a bonfire the Château d'Aulay had not seen before nor will see again while it stands For here was wood as old as history, a tangle of grass all ready for the burning, a beacon piled up by the centuries. You had but to touch it with fire to send the flames leaping up above the very tree-tops, roaring and reddening as though the earth had vomited them forth. Even our own men drew back aghast before their handiwork—the frightened birds whirled high in the blue ether above, uttering piteous cries; the ground was alive with the brutes which raced across it.

And the Red-Caps for whom we waited, what of them? At the first we heard no sound which spoke

of men. If they warned one another, the roar of the flames drowned their voices. In truth, the silence perplexed us—we knew not what to make of it Bitter as we were toward them we had no desire to punish them by fire, but only to drive them from the house and compel them to declare themselves.

"Let them keep ambush in that," cried old Gervais of Blois, as the wood glowed with the red-heat within it; "let them wash their dirty hands in golden water. It will be the first time they were clean for many a long year."

I told him that I had begun to doubt if there were any men in the thicket at all; but this was foolishly spoken, for even while I said it a great gaunt man came screaming out of the underwood, and in his blind fear of the flames ran a zigzag toward the drawbridge of the house. Espying the water of the moat he leaped into it and stood there bellowing like a bull. Hardly had we done laughing at him—for the fellow had no greater harm than singed ankles—than other faces began to show themselves amid the trees, and some of these we plainly recognised to be those of the ruffians who had done murder in the château last night.

Now, indeed, were they between the devil and the deep sea. If they raced across the park there were musket-balls to follow them; if they tried to get away on the far side of the thicket, that was the place we had fired first and there the flames leaped

highest. Driven to madness by their situation, many of them stood stock-still and yelled like frightened animals; others boldly ran for liberty, and we let them go with gun-shots high above their heads to scare them. A man does not kill his fellow-men in cold blood, and we had given punishment enough yesternight to teach the lesson which should be long remembered. So we let them go, I say, and in sheer pity we ourselves beat into the thicket presently and dragged out those who were afraid to come, catching them by the neck and heels as though they had been rabbits squatting to a weasel.

What astonished us beyond everything was the number of them. There must have been at least eighty men hidden in this wood since yesterday, and waiting there, I have no doubt, to give us a Red-Caps' welcome. Many of these we plumped headlong into the moat; others the servants drove out with whips; others, again, saved themselves by their heels and ran half-way to Tours, as the story goes, before the fright of the fire could be shaken from them. To say that we had no pity is to misunderstand the circumstance. These villains had been abroad for long weeks past, burning, slaughtering, ravishing in the homes of honest Frenchmen. The whip and the water were but a light punishment for their crimes. We did not spare them, and were not ashamed to answer those who accused us. Well, indeed, for France if others had defended their homes as we defended ours.

The great beacon burned through that autumn night and was still blazing when the dawn came. But we were the masters of the château, and, for all that we knew, there was not a Red-Cap within three leagues of it.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE GUILLOTINE

We had driven off the Red-Caps, I say and long months were to pass before we saw them again. The meantime brought us letters from Paris and several to me from my friends in America, among which there was a note from my old comrade, Gad Grimshaw, of Philadelphia, which I read with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret. Of my marriage he said not a word. His sister Honor had gone down to Carolina, he told me and was recently the guest of General Washington at Mount Vernon. As for himself, he had married a widow by the name of Andrews, and given up playing the fiddle. "To be sure," said he, "a married man may hear music enough in his own house and leave the tune to others." Remembering what little Honor had told me of the widow I could put two and two together quick enough, and, thought I, 'tis a lame duck step old Gad will dance nowadays, be sure of it.

That Honor had not written to me by her own hand I set down to the circumstance of my marriage. A man may be a very brother to his comrade's sister and find her none the less pouting on his wedding-

day and the last to wish him happiness. Whatever Honor's friendship had suffered by my love for Pauline, my own remained a precious thing to me—so precious that I feared to think upon it sometimes, lest the thought were false to one who had the greater claim upon me. For the same reason I dared no longer contemplate a return to America. My home must be in France or England, by Pauline's side, sure of her love and fidelity however little I might understand her. Indeed, the mystic nature of that true child of the South perplexed me more every day that I lived. We Anglo-Saxons know little of the Celtic mind. Its vision-land is none of ours. We lack the imagination to understand it, and sometimes we are in plain hostility to it.

There could be none of this vexation in my love for Pauline. If I did not share her dreams, I lived brave days with her at the old Château d'Aulay; the braver because we seemed to be a little colony safe amidst wide-spread dangers, standing shoulder to shoulder as a band of comrades who might laugh at all this talk of liberty and equality, and the freedom which cut your neighbour's throat to keep him a law-abiding citizen. There we were in the old château, or out of it, hunting and riding in the fine park; fishing in the river that cuts the old place in twain; having our cards and music at night; flying our flag fearlessly the while, and caring not at all what the Parliament did in Paris, or what Master Liberty

preached with a red cap askew upon his head. Such news as General Lafayette could send us left us anxious chiefly for his safety. He spoke of mobs still abroad in the streets; of those who would dethrone the King; of his plans to save France and make her glorious among the nations. "And fine words butter no parsnips," said I to my comrades. "We shall have to ride to Paris yet and catch him by the heels as we took the fellows out of the burning bush yonder."

They agreed with me; but I could see how greatly my wife admired the General's courage and how often her heart was back in Paris where the danger lay. These pleasant months at the château had begun to pall upon her. Our little regiment became lazier every day. There was old Gervais of Blois, grown as fat as a Normandy butter-woman. His comrades spent half their nights dicing by the fire in the great hall. Le Brun, who had lived a gipsy's life, suffered a kind of intoxication of leisure, basking in the sun when the sun shone and resting like a tired dog when the skies were dark. That Pauline wished to be quit of these good fellows I could well understand, but for my part I opposed their departure.

"The danger will return," said I. There was never a truer word spoken in the house.

I say that it was a true word; but many months had run out before I knew it to be true, and then the thing came upon us so suddenly that the whole peril

stood revealed in the very same hour that we had warning of it. I had ridden with Pauline through the park that very morning and seen nothing beyond ordinary. Old Gervais had been abroad foraging in the villages, and he came in without any particular tale to tell. Just as we had done for long months, so this day we sat down a merry company to our noon repast, and were already cracking jokes over the good wine when, in a lull of our talk, I thought to hear a strange sound afar off in the park, not unlike the first rumble of a storm or the distant thunder of the sea surf upon an angry shore. Alone in catching the sound, I said nothing of it for some minutes, until, indeed, Le Brun's quick ear caught it with me and we exchanged a rapid glance as much as to say, "What now?" Making some good excuse to Pauline, we slipped from the room and ran out to the high terrace of the château, whence you can look over the river and the park; but hardly had we set foot upon this than we perceived some two or three hundred men entering our domain by the southern road and coming on apace toward the house, all capering and dancing, singing and shouting, like the people of a town gone mad over a victory.

That the rabble was armed the sunlight showed me plainly enough. Gleams of light flashed from their uplifted pikes; I could detect musket-barrels across the shoulders of the first comers; the bright rays danced upon the brass of the drums they rolled inces-

santly. More than this, many of them were mounted and a great press of horsemen surrounded a number of men upon foot, who, both by their situation and attitude, I judged to be prisoners taken upon the journey and brought to our park for a purpose I was unable to imagine.

"Jourdain's men—and five hundred at that——"

Old Gervais of Blois had now come to my side, and the others were already running out of the château, called by the incessant rolling of the drums. So much had the spectacle fascinated Le Brun and myself that we stood there, gazing upon it as children, amazed and forgetful of the others. But now we awoke to our danger, and with a loud cry of "Guard!" we ran to our posts, some to draw the bridges, some to ring the alarm bell in the great tower, others to stack the arms upon the terrace and to stand by the cannon we had placed upon the ramparts against such an emergency as this.

Of our own people, many had been working in the park when the rabble entered. These, when they heard the bell, came flying over the grass toward us, pursued by outposts of the horsemen; and no sport in all the world did our younger men find so engaging as that of potting the rogues who followed our fellows and seeing them roll from the saddles they sat so ill. This, however, was but a beginning, for the Red-Caps quickly discovered their danger, and drawing off to a safe distance they yelled defiance, to which we

answered with a ringing cheer, and the King's flag flying proudly from our loftiest turret.

"Give them the grape," cried old Gervais, dancing like a lad in his excitement; "we'll roll their drums for them—the grape, my lads, and altogether for God and the King."

A dozen voices took it up; but it seemed to me that this was not the moment to show our hands, and so I told them plainly.

"They have prisoners with them," said I; "keep your shot until it can serve them. We'll let them have it time enough. Patience is the word, old comrade."

He assented with a shrug of his broad shoulders.

"True enough," said he; "and yet a man's blood may boil to be at them. I have a score to settle with Master Jourdain there, and I'm no patient creditor."

"He's brought the money in a cart," chimed in another, pointing to a small farmer's waggon which accompanied the rabble.

I had not noticed this before; but looking at it closely now, I observed that the rogues crowded about it very eagerly, and that its burden afforded occupation to many hands.

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "they bring a guillotine."

Now General Lafayette had written to us of this dreadful machine, then first beginning to be used in the name of liberty in Paris, We had heard of it

also as being employed in the provincial cities; but that it should be carried and set up here in our own park at the Château d'Aulay spoke of a fiendish malice which nothing could better. No longer could we doubt what these villains intended to do. Our high place upon the ramparts showed us their occupations very clearly. We watched them carrying the boards and pillars of their ghastly implement to a little green mound where their vengeance should be done; we could plainly discern their wretched victims, men, and women too, helpless apart as sheep before a butcher's block. But we spoke no word upon it. In silence we stood while the first man was dragged to the machine, thrown upon his stomach, and instantly laid beneath the knife. Silent still, as though a spell were upon us, we saw the great axe rise and fall and heard five hundred yelling demons cry, "Liberty!" Again the sunlight glittered upon its broad blade; again it fell, and a human head rolled upon the sunburnt grass. Our tongues were still, our hearts burned, but our hands were idle.

"Zaida, do you still speak of patience?"

My dear wife asked the question, turning upon me eyes aflame with anger. The reproach of her words I felt to be unmerited. To have fired upon them hitherto would have been to fire at the innocent and the guilty alike. But now a number of their people had come nearer the château to mock us and upon these we might justly take vengeance.

"Have at them, old Gervais!" I cried; "have at them, in God's name!"

He, too, leaped up as though a man had struck him with a whip, and, blowing a reddening torch into flame, he set it to the touch-hole of one of the brass guns upon the ramparts and a crashing report seemed to shake the very walls beneath us. Such a yell as followed it, when the rabble perceived what we were at, I have never heard in all my days. For which of them had bethought him of cannon, or asked what stood upon the ramparts? And just as men who have pegged a tent upon an ant-hill will have it down with lightning fingers when they discover the truth, so did the villains begin to undo the work they had done and to carry it with all speed elsewhere.

We could see the horsemen using their whips upon the prisoners and driving them backward to the gates. Racing, and running, and yelling, the cowards fell flat at every thunder of our guns; while in the intervals they spread abroad over the park and threatened us with horrid gestures. Nor did they at that moment seem to be idle threats. Our triumph must be brief enough. They were soon beyond the reach of such cannon as we possessed, and, thus defying us, they set up their guillotine anew.

I have been in many a dangerous enterprise in the course of my adventurous life, in many a situation of disadvantage and place of peril; but never, I think, have I known such minutes of distress as those

which followed upon our discovery that cannon could no longer reach those miscreants and that the victims of their ferocity must die before our very eyes. To stand helpless, to gnash our teeth, to cry to Heaven for justice upon them—what alternative lay before us unless we took horse and rode out boldly among them to our own certain destruction? This latter course I believe we had followed there and then but for Le Brun, who reminded us that by so doing we should deliver up the house we had so long held, that we certainly should not save a single life among the prisoners, and should end our own ignominiously upon a venture that true courage could not require.

"You are a handful against an army," said he; "will you give them the satisfaction of dragging you to yonder machine, or will you keep your flag flying? If one poor wretch there could be saved by your arms, I would say, 'Go.' But you know that you cannot save them. This house is our heritage. Let us not destroy it vainly."

This was good sense enough, although the younger men murmured at it, and even some among their elders plainly showed their dissatisfaction. As for my dear wife, her manner of hearing it surprised me immeasurably; for she counselled neither our going nor staying; but silent at the very parapet of the ramparts she appeared to gaze intently across the park as though for some word or message which would answer the distress of her expectation and do

that which our arms were impotent to do. So intent was she upon this that many of us ceased to press the question of a sally; and standing by her side, we, too, scanned the green park lying low between the hills and fell to wondering what new thought had come to a mind ever active and never so quick as in an hour of supreme emergency.

"What do the heights show you, old Gervais?" I asked the veteran, who stood near me throughout.

"I see the sun shining where darkness would be the better thing, Mr. Kay."

A little interval of waiting and again a question between him and me.

"They halt at the work, old friend. Does the wind carry a message of voices?"

He clutched me by the arm and pointed to the river dividing the château in twain.

"The waters dry up in their bed," said he; and then, "Look closer; the river has ceased to run."

A chill of fear and awe fell upon me as though a cold wind had blown down suddenly from the hills above us.

"If they have opened the dam at Issé," said I, "yonder mob must learn to swim."

"Ask madame of that," said he; "her messenger rode out an hour ago."

I did not speak again. The scene alike inspired terror and a hope no words might express. Once before, I remembered, in the story of the Château

d'Aulay, had a master of the house flooded the lowlands about it to drive an enemy out. And alone among us in this fateful hour had my little wife remembered that the lake of Issé could avenge where men were impotent.

"Do you hear aught now, old Gervais?"

"I hear a sound of voices," said he, "but they are not of men."

"The floods are out," said I, "and Heaven help those who lag."

He astounded me by a question I had not so much as thought of.

"And what of the prisoners, Mr. Kay?"

"Their wit will save them, and the boats are ready."

Pauline replied to him, and her answer made it plain that she had contemplated this and was prepared for it. The prisoners must escape by their own wit, or perish with the others. We ourselves were to remain spectators of that scene no longer. Such boats as the château possessed—great scows and flat-bottomed vessels—strong hands now dragged to the lower terrace beyond the gardens, and made ready to launch when the flood should burst upon the park. As for the rabble, its dull ears had already caught the distant roar of rushing waters, and it stood terrified as though suddenly confronted by a judgment.

Many, be sure, among the number there had heard

the tradition of the great reservoir at Issé; many had seen its lofty banks, and asked what would befall if the waters breached them. And now their dull understanding began to comprehend. There, yonder, at the valley's head, was the rolling crest of the great white wave which would engulf them. It needed no words to tell them that hostile hands had opened the sluice-gates of the lake which tradition said the Romans had built at Issé. They understood that just as the first master of the château had let the waters loose upon his enemies, so had they been let loose this day through flood-gates set up for that very purpose by old-time soldiers who held the house for good King Henry of Naverre. And who may describe the panic that fell upon them? Pell-mell, one upon the other, now up, now down, screaming, fighting, they raced for the highlands and shelter. Their prisoners, snatched from one peril to be confronted by another, found themselves deserted in a twinkling—a little island of men in an ocean of green grass. Our loud cries that they should run to us, the signals we fired to them, attracted their attention, but did not win an immediate response. The water appalled them. It was almost upon them before they moved.

I say that the flood came down the hillside with a roar as of thunder. Let me now tell you (and this has been a good jest to me since the day I speak of) how it came about that we saved the prisoners and did not pay forfeit of a single life for that daring

stroke a brave girl played so fearlessly. I had thought that every man, woman, and child (for there were children among the condemned) must perish in the flood; but I had forgotten alike the extent of the park of Aulay and the depth of the lake of which the sluice-gates were opened. A very torrent on the hillside, the flood became but a gentle, rippling sheet of water when it flowed upon the park and covered the great grass lands. The depth of a man's knee; such it may have been, certainly no more. If the prisoners were scared to a point beyond reason, their joy when they discovered the truth, and we fetched them to the terrace of our house, can be understood by none but those who have stood sometime in the shadow of death. For Pauline, Beauvallet's daughter, had saved them indeed. And thus was her oath fulfilled—that she would be the mistress of her house though all France said her "nay."

That night we spread a feast in the hall of the château and held high carnival. For the morrow we cared nothing. We believed that our wit could hold the house against ten thousand and were unafraid.

And who shall say it was a vain boast? In truth, circumstance forbade us to put it to the test. For even as we held carnival in our citadel, there came a messenger from Paris, riding fearlessly through the spreading waters, and the letter that he carried was

from General Lafayette, imploring us earnestly to return.

"I am in some danger," he said, "and you can be of service to me. Come, my friend, for old friendship's sake."

## CHAPTER XXV

### IN THE SHADOW OF NOTRE DAME

Our friend stood in need of us and we must go to him. Whatever danger the venture might bring upon us, that we refused to contemplate, my little wife was the first among us all to deride it.

"He has a just claim upon us," she said; "and, Zaida, you have no better friend."

And so we set out the very next day, and in four days' time were at the gates of Paris. It may be that our long residence in the country and our imperfect knowledge of the events which had happened in the city meanwhile blinded us to the risks we ran and inspired the false hope which animated us. If that were so, the western gate of Paris opened a new vista to our astonished eyes. Scarcely had we ridden up to it when we were surrounded by a horde of ruffianly guards, who demanded our papers with menaces and brandished their pikes before our eyes to convince us of the necessity of instant compliance. To them I said that I was an American citizen riding to see General Lafayette—an answer which appeared to enrage them beyond measure.

"Do you go to Sedan?" one asked me.

Another said: "If there be a General Lafayette in Paris, you shall see his head upon a pike to-morrow."

I shrugged my shoulders and begged that they would appoint an emissary to accompany me to the house of Gouverneur Morris, whom I then believed to be in the city. Pauline herself had a brighter thought, and, whispering to Le Brun aside, she bade him cast a handful of gold pieces among them. Such oil upon the hinges of the gate proved a magic dose. They permitted us to pass without question, while one of them cried after us, "There go round necks for the knife." This troubled us less than the news of General Lafayette. If he were not in Paris, why had he summoned us?

"There is a deeper story than his letters tell," said I; "he is in Paris, and Paris knows nothing of it."

Pauline reminded me how different it had been last time we rode through that same western gate. "He came to our help then, Zaida," she said; "fortune has changed if we can be of service to him now."

"Who knows?" said I. "There would be stranger chances. And yet I can imagine no circumstance where friendship so humble may help him. If it be so, this journey is well undertaken. I will believe it when I hear him."

She fell to silence a little while, but presently she said:

"I dreamed it long ago in England, Zaida. This very scene comes back to me from my sleep. We shall find General Lafayette and go away with him. He will be in great danger, but you will escape it, Zaida. We ride toward the sun; and then there will be darkness. That is what I dreamed, Zaida. How true it all seems to-night! The very wind is a whisper of my dead father's voice. I hear him calling me wherever I go. He loved me, Zaida; and I was all he had to love. Who will blame me if I believe him to be near me to-night? What faith forbids me that?"

This memory of her dream returning so strangely at such a moment filled me with great apprehension. I remembered how unwilling she had been to come to France at all. The scene about us in the darkened streets contributed little to my reassurance. Late as the hour was, companies of men were abroad in many of the *faubourgs* through which we passed. Again and again we heard the rolling of drums and the fierce voices of a rabble. Twice we were stopped, and nothing but the bold front we showed saved us from outrage. The mob passed us by, and went on to beat at the door of the first great house they came upon. I shut my ears to the doleful cries of anguish which attended their visit. The day was near when I must understand what such scenes meant.

"Had I known that we were come for this, I would not have let my wife enter Paris for all the

gold in France," I said apart to Le Brun. He knew not what to answer me.

"Let the General tell us," said he; "the worst can find us on the road again."

There was wisdom in this, and it carried us to the Hôtel de Lafayette, upon whose door we knocked at one o'clock of a summer's morning. To our astonishment, not a window opened to our appeal, though we beat heavily upon the gates of the house; nor for a long time did those within appear to hear us. We must have waited the best part of an hour before any of the servants answered, and then it was a shivering old man, who seemed to stand in awe of us.

"My master is not here," he said; "what do you want with me?"

I told him my name and the business which had carried me from Touraine. A long while incredulous, he presently found his wits, and, coming out into the roadway, he raised himself upon tiptoe and whispered something in my ear—

"Rue du Cloche et du Notre Dame—at the Sign of the Rood. Let none see you come or go. My master is there."

I promised him discretion, and he withdrew instantly and shut and bolted the wicket behind him. His information confirmed the suspicion concerning General Lafayette with which I had entered Paris. How had the mighty fallen indeed! I remembered when last I saw him how he had galloped about the

city on his splendid charger, boasting of his National Guard and his gospel of belief and the world's wonder he would achieve. And now he lay a fugitive, hunted for by that very guard he had founded.

We crossed the river by the Pont Notre Dame and made our way afoot to the house the old servant had named. Our horses were taken by Gervais to an inn, whither some of our company followed him. The Rue du Cloche we found to be a narrow, ill-lit thoroughfare, with a row of bulging, gabled houses, whose eaves touched eaves above us, and were shuttered every one below. Not a soul appeared to be abroad in this part of the world. The great cathedral stood up bold and black in the moonbeams; the river, here divided in twain by the island upon which the church of Notre Dame stands, swirled and eddied in pools of mellow light; the bells chimed the watches of the night as though every note were a call to sleep. But no sentinel patrolled the street. We knocked in confidence upon that door we had ridden so many leagues to open.

An old priest answered our summons and led us with a brief word to the first floor of the house. There, seated in a corner of the room, his face buried in his hands and a wretched candle guttering by his side, I found General Lafayette again. We embraced with scarce a word spoken. I perceived he had been weeping and would not ask him why. The house might have been a very prison for its silence. And

we had not been within it ten minutes when the abbé blew out the one candle that still burned and bade us hush.

"The guard is entering the street," said he. "God help us if they come here."

## CHAPTER XXVI

### FROM THE INN OF THE SILVER BELL

We listened with ear intent and deep breathing which spoke of each man's place in the darkened room. A patrol had entered the street and begun its search of the houses one by one. We could hear the heavy thud of pikes upon the doors; and, upon this, screams and cries and piteous entreaty. In the house opposite to us, whose latticed window stood so near our own that men could have shaken hands across the street, some one lighted a lantern and crossed the room to wake a sleeper in the far corner. Then the light went out, but I could still discern a dim face at the casement and I knew it to be a woman's.

The patrol at that time may have been a hundred paces from our door. It had begun with the first house and driven out three trembling priests, canons of Notre Dame, who died, every man, hacked to pieces by the mob at the Abbey prison not three weeks later. Whether the men sought M. de Lafayette or merely prisoners remained unknown to us. The second door they beat upon would not open to them and they burst it in with their pikes. Whoever held that house showed a bold front—we heard a

pistol fired and then a clash of arms; but silence fell quickly upon it, and that had a grim eloquence all its own. The third house, I think, was empty. The ruffians went in and out impatiently; but at the fourth door a woman opened to them, and the first man who put his arms about her she stabbed to the heart. There were three houses now between our own and the patrol. Le Brun came to my side in the embrasure of the window that he might prime his pistols. General Lafayette did not move from his seat. I knew not what was in his mind; my own thoughts, making almost a madman of me, dwelled upon my dear wife and the folly which had brought us out of Touraine. Silently I pressed a pistol into her hand. She kissed me and covered it with her little white fingers, as though it had been the most precious thing in all the house.

So the patrol drew near. There were but two houses still to be searched, and of these the first had no better prey than a merry hunchback, who climbed the gables like a monkey and from the roof above cast down heavy tiles upon the astonished guard. They cursed him and fired their pistols after him; but no one had the courage to go where he went; and he sat long upon a dormer window defying them with a wit I envied him. Enraged by this they entered the house next our own, and we heard their heavy steps upon the stairs almost as plainly as though there had been no wall between. Who lived in the house we knew

not. A sound of voices came to us, now hushed, now high-pitched and sorrowful to hear. Then again we heard their steps, hither, thither, like the sound of rats beneath the flooring. Evidently they believed that some one lay hid from them. Nor were they long in unearthing this poor fugitive. A shrill scream which haunted me for many a day filled the whole street with an echo of woe unutterable. Then followed heavy blows upon some closed chest or locked door. Immediately a harsh voice cried, "The dog is here, but he is dead."

What had happened within that unhappy house? Had some poor wretch hidden himself in closet or cupboard and died of suffocation while they were coming at him? Or had his own hand decided that issue of life or death, otherwise to be so soon decided elsewhere? I shall never learn. It seemed to me that death and discovery advanced upon our own house with steps unutterably slow and dreadful. Bitterly now did I regret that I had left old Gervais at the inn and honest fellows with him. We were but six men in the house, and fifty or more in the street without. Had the brave company which defeated the Red-Caps in Touraine remained to me, I believe we could have held the house even against such odds. But regret was futile—the patrol was upon us. We stood at the stairs' head, M. de Lafayette before us all, and heard that dread summons—"Open in the name of the law!"

I have said that the General seemed like a man utterly wearied and broken when I first discovered him in the room. The change in him at this summons to yield was a thing that quickened a man's heart to see. Alert and ready, his step brisk, his movements agile, I perceived that those who took him would pay a heavy price for that night's work. Here was my dear friend come to life again. The very death which threatened us seemed less to be dreaded for his courage.

"Open in the name of the law!"

We closed our lips and no man spoke a word. The blows rained upon the door with a thunder of sounds which made the very house quake. I kissed my little wife and drew her closer to me. Flashing through my mind as a dream of summer upon a winter's night were those pictures of Kentish roses and a little thatched cottage and a young girl's laughter heard therein. Ah! what folly had sent me out from that—to such a night as this? Each blow that fell seemed to strike my very heart. Death, death—the night wind whispered it and the eaves echoed it. Would they never enter? Why did they delay? Had they turned from our door, then? I could not believe it, and yet some one whispered that it was so.

"Hark!" said a voice, "there's a cry from the river."

We ran back to the window of the room and heard it clearly.

"Lafayette! Lafayette!"

"What trick is this?" cried the General, daring for the first time to speak aloud.

"Some one calls you from yonder belfry tower," said Le Brun.

We listened amazed. The cry "Lafayette" was like a watchword to the patrol. With one great shout, forgetful even of their prisoners, they raced down the street toward the bridge of Notre Dame.

Who had given the alarm, then? Little Pauline told me, crying in my arms.

"It's Master Gervais," said she; "he has saved us."

I told her that I verily believed that it was so. If there had been a doubt, new voices in the street would have reassured us. We opened the basement and discovered ten of our fellows below.

"Who comes?" I asked.

"Georges of Bayonne," was the answer; and upon this a second voice cried that Master Gervais would answer for the guard.

"We have a boat at the river," said this man. "The horses go before us to the Vincennes gate. Lose no time, maître, or old Gervais will want a second throat."

Be sure we lost none. The street was full of people when we crossed our threshold—chiefly priests and women who had escaped the patrol and were all hud-

dled together like timid sheep in a pen. These, I learned afterward, hid themselves next day in the vaults of a cathedral, where many of them lay secure to the very end of the Revolution. We could do nothing for them but advise them to get gone before the patrol returned. For ourselves, we were but flying from one peril to another, as the good fellows told us. None the less, flight appeared to be a very miracle.

"We had the news at the inn of the Silver Bell," said honest Georges; "the Commissioners, who ride at dawn to Sedan to arrest General Lafayette, are in the beds we would have slept in. That's how it came to be. We were debating it at the corner when we saw you cross the Pont Notre Dame. And where should you be going, maître, if not to the house wherein the General lay hid? Gervais was all for that. 'The gates are watched,' said he, 'but there are boats enough down yonder. Let the ostler get the horses through—a cocked hat will pass him for a servant of the guard and a gold piece will do the rest.' There's old Gervais playing the fox to begin with, and upon that the mocking-bird. He'll call them half-way to St. Denis before he's done with them, and be up with us when we quit Vincennes. Have no fear for old Gervais, maître. 'Twould be a clever dog that tracked him down."

Many said "Aye, aye," to this, but the dancing waters of the river came suddenly in view to silence

every tongue and remind us how little words would help us in that which we had to do. There at the quay a great flat-bottomed boat fretted and complained under the bondage of the hawser. Out beyond it lay a pool of golden light, and beyond that again the black and monstrous shades of the great church and the houses beneath it. Not a soul appeared to be abroad. Down at the water's edge we heard nothing of those dreadful cries of agony which stood for the voice of Paris that night. A weird, ghostly silence breathed all about us. The reflection of our images in the moonlit water was like that of a phantom company creeping out from the shadows of death. We pushed the boat off with scarce the splash of an oar. What a voyage to an undiscovered country this must be! And did the scaffold stand at our journey's end?

Once out in the broad of the river Georges of Bayonne found his tongue again. Silence was not to be supported by such men as he.

"Sing, comrades, for God's sake," cried he; and then to General Lafayette—"'Twould be wiser to seem drunk than sober, General, for good wine turns no heads after the man who drinks it. If we hold our tongues the patrol will ask why. But they like the flavour of good liquor too well to complain of a skinful."

The others chimed in again with a loud "Aye, aye."

Le Brun also was for music—"Pass out for drunken soldiers," was his word.

"I could not contradict so excellent a man," replied General Lafayette, and that was the first word he had spoken since we quitted the house. His command to them loosened their tongues amazingly. They took up an old chant sung long ago in the Salle d'Armes and immediately upon that the wild song known as the hymn of the Marseillaise, and never did actors at a booth feign drunkenness so well. Twice a patrol boat shot out from the shelter of an arch and its captain asked us for our passes, and twice we saved ourselves by a handful of silver and an incoherent answer which sent the fellows roaring with laughter to the bank again. If the jests had a horrid sound in a man's ears, at such a time and in such a place, he would have been a fool to complain of it. Our goal was the frontier of Belgium. Our liberty lay beyond it. This crazy ship made history for France. But for it General Lafayette would have been torn to pieces by the mob that night, or, at the best, saved for the massacres in the Abbey prison.

And what a reflection upon all his dream of liberty, and the fraternity of men! This secret flight by night, the weird song of the river, the drunken voices of men who played a drunkard's part for their very lives. Brave hearts truly, and all, it may be, who remained to him who but a few short years ago had been a very king in this city he loved. And

he, I said, was Lafayette of Barren Hill, whose name should be remembered in my own country when a thousand years had run.

But to-night he fled from the land of his birth, and the river sang his *vale*.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### TOO LATE

A LITTLE glimmer of grey light broke into the black darkness of the eastern sky as we approached the wood of Vincennes. There were market-boats upon the river, drifting down to Paris as though this were any common day. I heard the church bells strike the hour of four o'clock, and reflected that none of us had slept for twenty-four hours or more and hardly broken his fast for sixteen. A sense of fatigue and weakness crept upon me—and how must it be with little Pauline? I asked myself.

We had been rowing by houses on either bank until this time—many lighted brightly through the watches of the night; others all shuttered and black—though Heaven knows whether lighted windows were not more eloquent of sorrow than those which were void. Once or twice we heard a distant sound of rolling drums and troops upon the march; but saw no other guard-boat until the houses fell away and the green fields succeeded to them. Here the wood of Vincennes began upon our left hand. We made to find a landing-place when a long, black boat came up swiftly from the shadow of a low wooden bridge, and the

captain asked to see our papers. He was a one-eyed man in a cocked hat and a red scarf; and silver did not buy him.

"Honest citizens keep good money in their pockets," said he; "you must please to come ashore with me."

He drew his sword and stood up, swelling like a turkey-cock, in the stern of the boat. And this was his misfortune, for as the tide swung our boats together and I found him within arm's length, what should I do but give him a touch of my hand, and over he went, cocked hat and all, into the cool, green water.

"He'll be a prettier colour when he comes up," said I to his fellows, "and not so ready to meddle with soldiers of the Republic. Fish him up and tell him so."

Well, they set up a dreadful yelling, loud enough to bring a patrol from Paris to their assistance; but we were ashore while they were still at it; and, caring not at all whether the man sank or swam, we ran all together into the wood, while Georges of Bayonne whistled shrilly for the horses. Upon them, indeed, depended our very salvation; for if the lads at the inn had not got them through, then were we as good as in the Abbey prison.

"Do they answer you, Georges?" Le Brun inquired—and he had been a silent man that night.

"Unless my ears be gone, not a whisper, maître."

I felt my heart sink within me, but pressed the question again upon him.

"What was the understanding—how should mere lads pass the gate? There must have been a plan between you?"

"Mr. Kay," said he, "the new artillery is camped beyond Charenton—what easier to believe than that the horses were for them?"

"Had they believed the tale," said I, "we should not be asking the question."

He whistled again more shrilly than before; and blank enough were our faces when he was not answered. What could be done without horses Heaven alone knew. And we had but minutes to decide, for the river patrol still bawled behind us and a pistol-shot echoed their alarm—well for us upon the other bank and not our own.

"The lads have certainly been taken," said I.

"Not so, sir; thank goodness, they are yonder—and asleep, as lads should be at such an hour."

We all ran forward together and came upon a very human picture. Three young men lay fast asleep at the foot of a great chestnut-tree, and the friendly horses gazed about them with kindly looks, as though grateful for their liberty. Such a moment of thankfulness for our deliverance I had not known since we quitted the Château d'Aulay. Indeed, fortune's generosity seemed to make new men of us all; and, springing into our saddles, we were up and away

while the lads still rubbed their sleepy eyes and cried after us for a recompense we had already left upon the grass beside them.

The sun had risen by this time, and all the glory of a summer's dawn broke upon the sleeping country. Paris, that city of infinite suffering, showed us proud domes husbanding the sunshine, and pinnacles which flashed a thousand lights to salute the day. Thither, as to a place of pilgrimage, a city of joy and voices, a stranger might have turned his steps. But we, who knew what lay beneath, who had heard her cries of woe and witnessed her desolation—we pressed on as from a place of pestilence, out to the fields where a man could breathe, joyously to the high road by which a new country must be found. And for ten good hours we rode with but the briefest halts, which gave us bread and wine, with fodder for our horses. The frontier! Belgium! Ah! if we could but reach that goal in safety!

I shall make little mention of this journey, nor dwell upon the agonies of doubt we suffered, the shifts we were put to for food and horses, the farm-houses which sheltered us, or the many perils of discovery we so narrowly evaded. In those brief talks with General Lafayette which the journey afforded me, he told me something of those stirring months he had lived through in Paris; nor did he fail to speak of the circumstances which had brought him to this present pass, and now threatened to ruin him utterly.

That which chiefly delighted me was his own equanimity of mind and the satisfaction with which he viewed his own conduct—both in relation to the King and to the people.

"You ask me, Zaida," he said, "why I went into Paris, when every voice said that it was madness to go. Let it be sufficient to say that the King's safety called me and that I must answer. Had they listened to me His Majesty would have been at Compiègne to-day and a faithful army about him. But he would not venture it, and the attempt has recoiled upon my own head. If I have any satisfaction, it is that my duty is done. I could have saved him and he would not be saved. There is nothing more to be said."

I asked him what had forbidden, and he spoke of many things of which the poorest tidings had come to us while we were at Aulay. Of these the King's previous flight from Paris and his arrest at Varennes were almost new to me. I heard also of the attack by the mob upon the palace of the Tuileries, and of the General's part in that affair.

"The Queen would not put it to the hazard for the second time," said he; "the King, I believe, would have ventured it. As it is, all is lost, and I fear the worst. My letters told you that the Duke of Brunswick is upon our frontier with the Prussian and Austrian armies. There you have the secret of the crimes which Paris is committing and which she will

commit. The people believe that the aristocrats are coming back with mercenaries to punish them. Democracy and Belleville are in arms together. Heaven help those who are rash enough to think that reason can stem the tide of this resentment! Yesterday the Jacobins began to search every house in Paris for suspects. It was known that I had come in from Sedan. Had it not been for the old priest who sheltered me and your honest fellows, to-night would find me in the Abbey prison. I have much to be grateful to you for, Zaida, and chiefly that you came to me in my need."

I told him what I verily believed had been the truth —that he summoned us from Touraine not by reason of his own need, but to save us from the consequences of our acts against the Red-Caps. He would not admit it, though he granted that little Pauline would be safer in Belgium.

"The story of what you did at the château came to Paris the third day after you did it, Zaida. I knew nothing of this business of Jourdain's; but I am very thankful that we are on the road to Sedan. If the troops stand by me, the Commissioners from Paris may come and go as they please. There you have it simply told. I believe that my influence with the army is sufficiently established to defy the Jacobins. I shall do my duty by my country, but by my King no less. Little more than a month ago I addressed a letter to the Assembly which spoke my mind very

freely. It cost me my popularity in Paris, but that is of little moment while my conscience does not suffer."

Here was the General Lafayette I had known in America speaking to me again upon the high road to Sedan. If I doubted his confession that he cared nothing for his popularity, none the less his courage and his continuing faith in an ideal of liberty and fraternity delighted me. Equality for all men, honour for the King, glory for France—such were his ideals. A splendid soldier, who had learned much of the arts of war in America, he alone of the three French generals upon the frontier had disciplined an army and schooled it to resist the Prussians and the Austrians, then ready, under the Duke of Brunswick to invade France. And now this truly great man, who had sacrificed ease and fortune and all that makes life dear—who had sacrificed these at the bidding of his conscience—this man was a fugitive from Paris, racing for Sedan with the King's Commissioners who would have arrested him. The wrong of circumstance could not go farther, I thought.

"Let Sedan answer for your popularity," said I, fearing to tell him one-half of that which was in my mind; "if the Commissioners be there before us, then have they good horses. An American in your place would make short work of this Convention. These fellows like words better than gunpowder, General.

You have given them the first—the second may yet be tried if the worst befalls."

He replied to this, with some warmth, that he would never oppose the people's will, and that, while he had done his best to save the King, the idea of taking arms against his fellow-countrymen was utterly abhorrent to him. I did not press the matter upon his notice, my own immediate concern being for the old town of Sedan, where so much of good or ill might befall us. We were, upon the afternoon of which I write, already within an hour of the ramparts of that city of refuge wherein we hoped to find both friends and shelter. Pleasant hills now rose about us; we passed by fertile wooded slopes, green valleys rich in summer fragrance, farms nestling in sleepy hollows. The country became wilder with every league we rode. Our spirits rose as we contemplated the days of quiet content, the nights of rest we would enjoy when this wild flight was over. So little, I say again, can man foresee to-morrow.

It was near to ten o'clock that night when we entered the town of Sedan. A sentinel, challenging us roughly, brought his hand to the salute immediately when he recognised General Lafayette. The quick talk between them I shall never forget. In a word we learned the truth. The Commissioners from Paris were before us in the town.

We had ridden in an hour too late.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### SEDAN

We heard the news as men stunned by a sudden blow. Perchance none of us, not even General Lafayette, understood the whole meaning of it. Had we been travellers racing across a desert to an oasis of salvation; had we there discovered the well of our salvation to be dried up, we could not have fallen as instantaneously from heaven to earth.

The Commissioners before us! Their mission to arrest our dear friend and to carry him to Paris for a traitor. Judge how this affected us. We knew not whether to advance or retreat; we had neither consolation nor counsel upon our tongues. Too late! Just that, and then silence and the ill-lit streets of Sedan and an excited people discussing at their doors the very news which so greatly concerned us.

The night had fallen stifling hot and many were abroad in the narrow lanes of that frontier town. I saw little children fast asleep upon the cool flags before the doors of the houses; there were gossips at every corner; the taverns served drink to already drunken soldiers. Of these some cried, "Vive Lafayette!" others retorted, "Vive la République!" Of our destination we had no idea. The General

himself was so wrapped up in his own thoughts that we must have ridden half a mile from the ramparts before he spoke of it.

"Take madame to the Place d'Armes," he exclaimed, suddenly reining in at a cross-road and speaking with more earnestness than ever I remember to have been the witness of. "You will find good lodging at the Maison Turenne. I will come to you before morning if opportunity serves. If you need me, send to Lameth or De Pusy, and they will have news of me. It depends now upon the men. I believe they will stand by me—and yet, Zaida, can I make war upon my own country?"

To this I replied that his first duty was to himself, but he rejoined, very sadly, "No no; I have no longer a home in France. My work is done. I am a Frenchman and must not betray my country. Go now and leave me. I shall visit General Luckner and consult with him—the last time, yes. But now they have no need of me"; and this I do believe he said with tears in his eyes.

We found the inn to which he had directed us, a considerable house upon a fine, open place, though much frequented by officers of the army then camped about Sedan. The whole establishment, indeed, was wide enough awake as we rode up, and the name of Lafayette upon every tongue. In answer to our inquiries an obliging landlord told us frankly that we could have good rooms if we paid for them, "for,"

said he, indicating the soldiers, "this canaille has not got a sou in its pockets."

He went on to add that if he had not put abroad a story of fever in the house they would have robbed him of the very clothes to his back. "But I keep my youngest lad in bed," said he, "and that's for your lordship's own ear. They think he has the disease upon him."

I paid the fellow a good sum in gold, and Le Brun having seen to our horses (and old Gervais, who came up with us at Rheims, having commanded a tolerable supper) I went up to my room with little Pauline, and almost for the first time since we had ridden from Touraine I found myself able to speak intimately to her of that which we must do, both for ourselves and for M. de Lafayette.

"There is but one land that should receive him," said I—"my own dear America. Pauline, it has been in my mind ever since we quitted the château that we should go to America together, and the Marquis with us. To-night makes it sure enough. Whatever the army may wish—and I believe it would march upon Paris if he so commanded—General Lafayette will never fight Frenchmen, not even to save the King. These Commissioners carry a warrant for his arrest and the news that Paris has called him a traitor. What must he do, then, if not to turn his back upon France? And who shall befriend him if not that country he has served so well? This I mean to tell

him when he returns to us—and, dear wife," said I, "a day's ride will carry us into Belgium, and there we shall remember nothing but our love."

She was sitting upon her bed when I said this, holding her riding-whip still in her hand, and wearing the green habit in which she had travelled from Touraine. I thought her sweet face very drawn and pale; but the black eyes shone with a lustre beyond experience, and when she spoke to me she laid her hand in mine as though she feared to be alone.

"Zaida," she said, almost as one reproaching herself, "how much happier for you if you had never met a little girl upon the road to St. Jean de Luz!"

I took her in my arms and forbade her to speak so.

"I thank God for it every hour that I live, sweet wife. What has the whole world for me if your love be denied? You know that my heart speaks. Let the sun shine upon our English roses and we will laugh at these days together. But three leagues to the frontier, sweetheart. Ah! it is the night which brings the shadows upon that dear face I love. The morrow shall have a new message for me."

She shook her head in a way pitiful to see. I perceived that the journey had greatly fatigued her and that these fears for herself and me, forgotten at the château, had returned to torment her with a thousand apprehensions.

"You will go to England—yes, Zaida," she said, with the air of one who would interpret the prophecy

of a dream, "you will go to England, but I must return to France. I have known it ever since we left Paris. The voice has spoken to me again to-day. I dare not tell you what it said; but I have loved you, Zaida, loved you, and I shall carry your image in my heart wherever I go, even if it be to my father's house."

She said this with so much solemnity that I knew not how to reply to her. All the words of comfort I could speak fell upon ears forbidden to listen to them. Whispering her love in my arms, she asked of me many times that I would remember her in my own America—"your little wife who came to you upon the road to St. Jean de Luz."

A foreboding of the very worst found all her courage awake, but mine abandoned. I told her that a thousand men should not drive me out of France alive if she remained there. She answered again, "You will go to America, Zaida; but I shall go to my dead father's house." The very depth of her love denied the belief that this was but the prophecy of a high-strung girl, over-wrought by fatigue and peril. I knew that a voice from the unknown had spoken to her; and the very mystery chilled my heart beyond all power of words to express.

"Belgium to-morrow," I exclaimed again, "and the lanes of England within a week. We will take the General back, as we promised to do. I'll warrant that Parson Ingolsby will amuse him well enough.

You have not forgotten the parson, surely, dear heart, and the day his cudgel saved me? Aye," said I, "and I wonder where that same Armand de Sevigny is this night?"

"He would be with the aristocrats across the frontier, Zaida."

"Then let him look out for himself when we go across."

"You will go to-morrow, Zaida—you and M. de Lafayette."

"If the army wishes it so. Were I in the Marquis's shoes we would be marching on Paris before the week was much older. Do you think this canaille would stand a whiff of grape-shot, Pauline? Why, remember how they ran from us in Touraine. The General could save the King if he marched on Paris."

She shook her head and persisted.

"He will cross the frontier to-morrow, and you will be with him, Zaida."

And then, as upon an impulse, she hid her face upon my heart and, putting both her white arms about my neck, she said:

"God bless you, dearest husband! God guard and save you always!"

## CHAPTER XXIX

### WE PASS THE FRONTIER

I SLEPT a little while at dawn, General Lafayette not having then returned to the inn. When I awoke I discovered to my surprise that Pauline was already dressed, and that she stood at the window of the room looking out over the Place d'Armes. To me there seemed nothing astonishing in the fact that her mood of last night had changed altogether, and that the morning found her in such different spirits that I had never known the like of them since we entered France. This is ever the way with such natures as hers. Tears and joy, sunshine and shadow, they follow each other like showers in April. The Pauline of my boyhood spoke this morning and gladdened my heart with her merry prattle.

"Here's the great and glorious army of the frontier threatening to beat its officers, Zaida. Oh, please, be quick and come. A whole army of guards running after a poor little lieutenant who told them to march! Paris never showed us anything like this, Zaida. How can you lie in bed when such things happen?"

It was good, upon my word, to hear her laugh again. Jumping up apace, for I had done no more

than cast aside my riding tunic and draw off my long boots when I lay down to sleep, I went across and kissed her—and then stood with my arm about her waist to witness the spectacle she named to me.

Sure enough the whole Place d'Armes was full of brawling troopers, some at the drill, some grouped together like city folk about a spectacle—others quarrelling with their officers, and a dozen at least, as she had declared, running after a poor little boy of a lieutenant and threatening him with their bayonets. What he had done to offend them, neither she nor I came to know. But the incident spoke eloquently of the discipline of this frontier army; and I wondered no longer that the General had despaired of it.

"These are the men that the Marquis would have marched to Paris to save the King," said I. "I pity His Majesty if they go there. We have some notions of liberty in America where soldiering is concerned; but we draw the line at putting our officers under the pump. General Lafayette says these fellows will fight when the time comes. They begin upon their officers beforehand, and that gives them practice, anyway. We'll get some breakfast, and then have another peep, dear heart. A puppet show could not be funnier."

She did not move from the window nor appear to hear me. By her manner she waited for some one to

come to the inn—a notion which proved true enough; for we had not stood there ten minutes longer when a great shout went up, and all these disorderly groups immediately fell to attention as a horseman appeared amongst them and saluted them with a dignity which none could match.

"There is General Lafayette," she cried, with a sudden change of manner I had little liking for. "He has come to speak of Belgium, Zaida. We shall ride at once—there is danger in this house. Go to him, Zaida; he is waiting for you."

All the laughter had left her face; the shadows had fallen upon it again just as they fell when she held me close to her last night. And this was the more amazing when I remembered that if General Lafayette came to speak to us of Belgium, then also should he speak of England and our liberty, and even of that greater journey which might carry me to America again, to my home and kindred and the land of freedom. This, however, was no time to speak of it. I went down reluctantly as she had wished, and found the general at the door, and with him three officers I had never seen before. Drawing me aside to the parlour, where coffee was ready to be served, he told me of his resolution in the briefest words.

"We ride to Belgium, Zaida," he began. "There is no longer an alternative. These fellows receive me well enough, but their loyalty would not stand a single shower of rain. That I am now convinced of.

It is Belgium or Paris—a head for the guillotine or a fugitive from the army. I choose the latter course. Some day I may be again of service to France. The time is not yet."

I applauded his wisdom, exhorting him above all to dissociate himself from the ruffians who governed France and the crimes in which acquiescence must involve him.

"You have seen the Commissioners, then, and heard them," I put it to him; "do they speak of compromise, or is it this cant of treachery and arrest?"

He smiled drily.

"What they speak of I know not. Send to the guard-house and the guard may tell you."

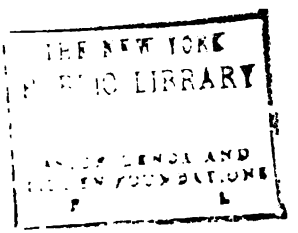
"You have arrested them?"

"An hour ago. And that, Zaida, is the very last command I shall ever give to these men who love me. Already the factions make themselves heard. I could leave Sedan now, but to-night it may be too late."

"Then for Heaven's sake go at once," said I, and my earnestness had that behind it which even he could not withstand.

His hesitation in response almost angered me. Here was a man who stood on the very threshold of the scaffold (for I could not deny it to be that) and yet would not mount a horse to save himself. Perhaps his courage rebelled against a seeming surrender to mob law. Or was it that his love for

"'WE RIDE TO BELGIUM, ZAIDA,' HE BEGAN"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France tormented him, saying, "If you go, you shall never return?" I cannot tell you. The entreaties of his friends De Pusy, Lameth, and Maubourg availed no more than my own. And even while we talked a great crowd gathered in the Place d'Armes, and ill-disciplined soldiers demanded that he should show himself.

"Where is Mme. Pauline?" he asked me suddenly.

I told him that I would bring her, and, running upstairs, I let her know how it stood with him.

"It is a matter of hours," I said to her; "they will tear him to pieces if he goes back to Paris. See to it that he does not, dear wife. You saved him on the road to St. Jean de Luz—save him again here upon the road to Belgium."

She was with him the half of an hour. What passed between them I did not learn, nor had I the will to enquire. It may be that, with a woman's wit, she spoke to him of his little children. I judged as much from the words that escaped him when I went in. When he called me to him the horses were already at the door.

"You are to meet me upon the road to Namur," he said, averting his face lest I should read a tale of distress therein. "Mme. Pauline has the passes I have written out for you. I shall go to General Luckner and see that the army loses nothing by my absence. Lameth and De Pusy will be with me. There is an inn three leagues across the frontier

where you may find good entertainment. Await me there—I shall have need of you, Zaida."

Such were the last words my friend Lafayette spoke to me upon the soil of France. The cheers and cries which followed him while he rode across the Place d'Armes came to our ears as we rode away from the stable-yard of the inn to the wooded heights beyond which lay Belgium. Freedom—how near we stood to it now! Liberty—what liberty should be so dear to us as that of the land we loved? Judge me not if at this supreme moment of my life an exaltation of mind beyond any I had ever known derided my fears of yesterday, and I could even recall with indifference my dear wife's apprehensions. Across the frontier, who could harm her? What enemy stood there to accuse us? We were fugitives from the madness of a thrice mad people. Would not all honest men welcome us?

And so we rode down to the promised land, and a vista of the woods showing us the red roof of a guard-house upon the road before us, our men put their horses to the gallop; and all together crying, "Belgium! Belgium!" as though it had been a watch-word of an army victorious, we raced to that delectable country, so greatly longed for and now, in God's mercy, achieved.

"Who comes?"

"Friends of Lafayette."

A little searching of our papers, some friendly

words from a boyish officer, and then that magic command: "Pass, friends of Lafayette."

So, under the ægis of that well-beloved name, we entered Belgium and believed that our days of travail were for ever done with.

## CHAPTER XXX

### JOY AND SORROW

THE French writer, Montaigne, has said that the most profound joy has more of gravity than of gaiety in it.

Had he been with my good fellows upon the road to Brussels the day after we fled from Sedan this opinion of his must have given way to another. A merrier company never passed upon a high road. What wild songs of student days we sang; how many were the jests which passed; what good cups of wine we drank at remote hostels; what mutual expressions of good-will and rejoicing came naturally to our lips!

That, however, which contributed beyond all to my own satisfaction was little Pauline's changed demeanour and the pleasure which these new scenes afforded her. Not once now did she speak of Belgium in other words than those which told of her gratitude. Worshipped by every man who rode with her, she became the very life and soul of the company; and I make sure that the music of her voice, the youth of love in her eyes, and the happy words of consolation she knew so well how to utter, were an inspiration of courage even to the General himself.

He had come up with us at the inn as he promised, and there resting for twenty hours, so greatly fatigued were we all by the haste and length of our previous journeys, we did not take horse again until eight o'clock of the following morning. Thereafter no considerable halt was proposed until we had come to the town of Namur, where we believed the outposts of the Austrian army, under the Duke of Brunswick, to be. In this we proved mistaken, as you shall see, and riding down that very day to the town of Rochefort, where we determined to take a second breakfast in the French fashion, what should happen but that we were challenged suddenly by a troop of dragoons who were out for their morning exercise.

The officer in charge of these proved to be a Frenchman of renown, Maréchal Bergamet. I did not look for any trouble with him; nor, I make sure, had the thought of such a thing entered General Lafayette's head. No sooner, however, had we given our names than the old soldier's manner changed immediately, and he was up in arms like a game-cock defending a brood.

"M. de Lafayette—and what does M. de Lafayette in Belgium?" he asked; and, without waiting for a rejoinder, continued immediately, "This is news indeed, Marquis. It must go to the Duke at once."

"Such is my wish," replied General Lafayette, with much dignity. "Since I no longer serve the King of France, my only desire is to pass through

Belgium as an humble traveller. The Duke, I am sure, will not forbid me that."

"We shall see—we shall see," was the dry retort; and while it was uttered the dragoons began to close up around us in a way far from reassuring. Alarming as this manœuvre was, I cannot say that I regarded it with any concern. We were without passports, and could not go on until we had them. General Lafayette's apostasy must be welcomed by the foes of France, and the delay, in any case, would be brief. Thus I reasoned. You shall see how false the event proved it.

Well, we all rode together into the town of Rochefort, and there were permitted to get the breakfast we so sadly needed. If we had half a houseful of dragoons for company, none of our fellows made any bones about it; while even the General held it to be no more than an officious act upon their officer's part.

"De Pusy is to go to Namur for our passes," said he; "we ourselves should arrive there by to-morrow at the latest. After all, time is of little consequence to us—although I would well be at Brussels, where madame and the children are to join me. They cannot make any difficulty," he persisted. "Here is one of the wolves who no longer trouble the shepherds. What cause have they to quarrel with him?"

I agreed with this, and Pauline taking up the thread of it, we spoke of Mme. de Lafayette's journey to Brussels and of the day when he would be with

his children again. I could see that my dear wife endeavoured to keep him from those thoughts of his own exile and fall which must sooner or later so greatly distress him.

In some way this unselfishness of hers appeared to me to be a good thing. Had I loved her less, memories of those dark hours of the night when she had spoken of evil impending, and even of our possible separation, would have troubled me not at all. As it was they came ever and anon like clouds upon the sky of my happiness—voices to ask, "Is it well with her? Is the gate of danger really passed by?"

These fears, I say, haunted me and would not be turned aside. Now that we had left France, as I believed for ever, an intense longing for her sweet company in my own dear land came upon me and would not be denied. I found myself drawing her close to me from time to time and looking into her black eyes as though to read their secrets. But they baffled me as ever they had done.

Did she laugh now at her own dream, or was this but a brave woman's courage defying it? I believe it to have been the latter. Once I remember, when General Lafayette had gone out to talk to the sentries who paced the street before the door of the inn, she turned to me and, lifting her lips, kissed my own almost with passionate ardour.

"Zaida," she exclaimed, "will you remember me always?"

"To my life's end, Pauline. How could I forget?"

"I shall leave you a little while, Zaida," she continued. "What is after is hidden from me—but I am going away from you. When you think of me let it be in our little garden amid the roses. I was happy in England. How well if we had never left it, Zaida!"

I told her that if she willed it I would carry her back to England again; but she protested that it must be to America first; and then, breaking from me as though to cloak some new emotion, she ran into the road after General Lafayette.

"We must watch him, Zaida," she cried, as she went, laughing at my surprise. "I do believe he would go back to Paris without us. Oh, he is a very helpless man, and I will be a mother to him."

She was out and away before I could reply; and for a little while I remained in talk with Le Brun and old Gervais as to the time which must elapse before we got our passports, and by what road we should ride to Brussels afterward. In the midst of which in comes Georges of Bayonne with the intelligence that we were to proceed instantly to Liége and there report ourselves to the proper authorities.

"Liége is no road to Brussels," said I. "Are we sheep that we must march before every dog that barks?"

Old Gervais said, "To the devil with their Liége!" but the sudden entrance of dragoons, who informed

us that our horses were at the door, cut his pious reflections short; and, sure enough, there were we all riding out again like whipped schoolboys before ten minutes had passed.

"What means it? What child's trick is this?" I asked the General.

He could only shake his head and protest his ignorance.

"They say that the order has come from headquarters. We are to go to Liége and there get passports. I confess that this news disquiets me, but explanations should easily make it better. As we said at the inn, Zaida, time is of little account to us. If madame and the children arrive at Brussels before us, they will know where to await me. It is natural, I suppose, that the aristocrats should be afraid of me. We must suffer yet a little while on their account, it appears."

I replied that for my own part the delay angered me beyond endurance; and in some confidence I spoke of little Pauline's foreboding and her sure belief that she would never go to America with me. To this he answered that women are often troubled by such fancies; "and be assured," said he, "that whatever may befall you and me in Belgium, Pauline of St. Jean de Luz will suffer nothing thereby. My own opinion is that we are the victims of a misunderstanding which will speedily be explained. There can be no other reasonable supposition."

"If that be so," said I "yonder fellows who gallop after us may bring the news of it. Draw rein a moment, General. Surely men would not ride like that unless urgency sat behind them. Is not that rogue upon the black horse known to you? I seem to have seen his face somewhere."

"That is the Marquis Armand de Sevigny," said he; yet so quietly that, Heaven knows, he could not have understood what the words meant to me.

Let me go back a brief instant and speak more intimately of this scene, momentous beyond any I have lived through; more terrible to me than any memory of my life.

We had ridden out some hours from the inn at Rochefort and had come to a diminutive hamlet with an ancient bridge that spanned a little river. I remember well a turn of the road beyond the bridge, with a church spire peeping above a clump of trees, and the stables of an inn abutting upon the highway. Behind us the white road lay straight as an arrow for many miles. Some of the dragoons who escorted us lagged upon this; others were already ahead calling for wine at the inn door.

At this very moment a distant sound of galloping fell upon ears quick to catch such sounds and to apprehend their meaning. But had our ears been less vigilant, our eyes would quickly have told us the news. Turning about in my saddle, I observed a

mighty cloud of dust floating away over the immense pasture; and from this there emerged presently a troop of men in blue and silver uniforms—Prussians I should have said at a glance, but with Frenchmen among them. Of the latter one was the man whose face should have been familiar enough to me. I had first seen him at the village of Barham, in Kent. I met him now, the last time that he and I would ever meet, here at this lonely hamlet upon the road to Liége; and meeting him I said, "Her dream was true; Heaven help us both, for this is the hour."

The troop, I say, rode down upon us like a whirlwind. What with the dust and the clamour, the astonishment of our escort and our own amazement, nothing could be heard or seen for some moments but the guttural exclamation of excited Germans and the threatening attitude of the soldiers about us. As for the man, Armand de Sevigny, he neither showed exultation at our capture nor remembrance of our quarrel; but, sitting quite still upon his horse, he gazed intently at my dear wife and never once took his eyes from her face. Had a stranger witnessed the meeting of those two, he would have said that they were strangers of whom the man had been struck by the young girl's beauty and she by his curiosity. Not pale or trembling as she had been an hour ago, but flushed and defiant and contemptuous, Pauline waited for him to speak. In this, however, he disappointed her, and the two were still face to face and silent

when a man in authority (whom I learned afterward to be a staff-officer from the Duke of Saxe-Teschen) rode up to General Lafayette and instantly demanded his sword.

"My master, the Duke," he said, speaking the French tongue as they speak it across the Rhine—"my master, the Duke, will reconsider his decision when you are willing to reconsider your opinions, General. As to the army treasure which you bring from Sedan, that must be handed over to me personally. I see that it has not accompanied you," he continued, with a smile, "but no doubt you will be willing to change the name of its destination for such consideration as I am instructed, upon compliance, to show you."

Well, I have never seen a finer thing than the expression upon General Lafayette's face when these infamous words were spoken. The invitation to him to recant the opinions of a lifetime; the suggestions that in quitting France he had carried off the army chests with him, could not fail to provoke that mirthful contempt in which none excelled him.

"Your gracious master," he said, "is, I perceive, a man of discernment. For his fine sense of that which is due to my honour and to his, I thank him. Allow me, sir, to ask a question in my turn. Am I to infer that, if the Duke of Saxe-Teschen had been in my place, he would have stolen the military chests of the army? Sir, I compliment him upon his candour.

There is much merit in an army chest if you be the guardian of it. Let him repair to Sedan and he will be able to correct my forgetfulness."

This reflection upon the Prussian army, afraid from the beginning to meet Lafayette upon the soil of France, stung this coxcomb of a man to the quick. I saw him bite his lip almost to the point of bleeding; but fearing, perhaps, to commit himself further before the troop, he merely bowed his head and answered, with unexpected restraint:

"Your words shall be faithfully reported to the Duke. Do not be astonished, sir, if you find him a poor listener. There are others of your company whom I must consider as my prisoners. Let them answer to their names as I call them."

He had a slip of paper in his hand, and now he began to call certain of us out to him, beginning with Lameth, then naming De Pusy and Maubourg; and lastly, to my very great astonishment, calling my own name, which he pronounced so ill, that he had to repeat it before I understood him.

"What does your Duke of Saxe-Teschen with me?" I asked; "does he know that I am an American citizen?"

He dismissed the protest with a wave of his hand.

"When the time comes the fact will not be forgotten. There are others here with whom we have no concern"—he indicated my own servants and looked hard, I thought, at Pauline herself—"they will be

conducted to the frontier under escort. M. de Sevigny, this is your affair," he said, addressing the man for the first time; "you will take as many troopers as will be necessary and see that the Duke's instructions are faithfully obeyed."

I controlled myself with what command of temper I could—though, Heaven knows, my very brain seemed on fire; and pushing my horse across to him, I said very earnestly:

"That lady is my wife. Where I go, she goes. The Duke, your master, has no quarrel with me and none with her. Let us understand it beyond cavil," I continued, the heat of my passion growing; "unless madame accompanies me I will not stir a step for all the Dukes in Austria. You will not deny me this," I said; "it can be nothing to you whether she go or stay—and, sir, it is all the world to me."

He shrugged his shoulders and made to turn away; but I had his bridle-rein and held him there while I continued.

"I am an American citizen and your country is at peace with mine. What forbids me this journey through your dominions? If you doubt me, let messengers go to the American Agency in Paris, to Gouverneur Morris or Mr. Jefferson. Sir, it is not to be supposed that my wife can enter France again in safety; and no man with any heart would think of such a thing. You have a house of your own and those who are dear to you within it, maybe. Hear

me, for pity's sake. Do not commit this crime against our common humanity. I pledge myself that madame shall go to England without any delay. Sir, it must be so—a soldier could not speak the word which would send a woman to death."

My words were coming near to choking me by this time, as the full meaning of this black hour began to be understood by me. As for the good fellows who had ridden with me from Touraine, their murmurs, at first scarcely audible, now began to express themselves in angry threats and even in a more ominous rattling of scabbards. The General alone remained calm; but there lay behind his words that which spoke of an emotion which only the deepest love could provoke.

"Sir," he said, "Mr. Kay has reason upon his side, The Duke can name no cause of complaint against this lady. As the wife of an American citizen, she is under the protection of the American Agency. I beg you reconsider a decision which may cost two countries much. You would not have it said that the Duke of Brunswick makes war upon women."

The man heard him with a contemptuous smile and a curled lip which spake his answer before his tongue had uttered it.

"I would have it said, sir," he rejoined, "that the Duke's orders are obeyed. The responsibility shall be upon my shoulders. Let the lady go to her friends in Sedan. We have women enough in Brussels."

"By all that is sacred," cried I, "she shall not stir a step. Or if she go, some shall pay for it. Le Brun, stand by me in this. Gervais, Georges, I count upon you——"

The words fell from my lips in a torrent. My sword was drawn, and all the madness of love and despair came upon me like a tempest. Had there been a thousand men around me, fear of them would not have kept me back. Driving my horse forward, I struck the Duke's officer with my left hand and sent him reeling from the saddle. The angry shouts from his troop, General Lafayette's remonstrance, little Pauline's distress, her entreaty that I would forbear, stayed me not at all. For an instant I saw her white face—the face of a child who had learned how to suffer—just as I had seen it upon that unforgotten day at St. Jean de Luz when she spoke of her father and the love she bore him. Upon her lips I seemed to read her words of eternal farewell. Then the dragoons closed about me; and going down heavily, my horse beneath, it seemed to me that destiny would be more merciful than they, and that in death I had found deliverance.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### PRISONERS OF STATE

I HAVE always held it a true saying that a man's private griefs, however much he may be stricken by them or whatever loss they might bring upon him, should hold no conspicuous place in the story of his life. For the sorrow assuredly will be real to him alone and is best locked in the secret chamber of his heart; while all the world has its own trials and is little ready to bear patiently the recital of another's. By which precept I am led to bid none be eloquent but that man whose eloquence can move others to joy. There are hours so sacred to us that none but the vulgar would pry into them. We best bear our burdens apart, in the lonely house which sorrow builds for us.

My story was broken upon the road to Liége; if tears blotted the pages that rightly should follow after; if a grief so poignant dictated them that the years have not lifted the shadows of it, who would be the better for their perusal? These pages I lay aside where no other eye but mine shall fall upon them. He who shared captivity with me has set mankind a brave example of reticence and fortitude. I can do no better than to follow it.

I say that my narrative was broken upon the road to Liége. Let me take it up, not at Namur, where we were confronted by the Prince Charles of Austria; not at Nivelles, where General Lafayette might have purchased liberty by a word; but in the fortress of the ancient town of Magdebourg, where for many months I lay in a damp and narrow cell beneath the outer ramparts; in a hole so black and wet and stifling that a dog might hardly have lived therein—a foul den so terrible to my memory that age has given me a child's fear of the darkness, and I would not live in a sunless land for a king's ransom. And for what had this punishment fallen upon me? For being the friend of General Lafayette, and by him named the friend of liberty.

The letters I wrote to Gouverneur Morris in Paris were never delivered. My very name was not for a long while revealed to the colonel of the fortress in which they imprisoned me. I had become a number, dead to the world and to my very gaolers.

Now this was at Magdebourg, to which fortress we had been conveyed from Wesel in the month of March in the year 1793. Lameth, threatened by that dread disease, consumption, had already been released. I knew not whether De Pusy and Maubourg shared our captivity; but that General Lafayette was near me his own face told me every day.

There upon the far side of a dark corridor, to which feeble rays of daylight came, but never a ray

of the sunshine—there at the grating of such a foul den as my own I saw him every day.

No word passed between us. Warders armed with muskets forbade us to open our lips; and yet it was much to have him near me, to reflect upon his courage, to be sure that he still lived. Dearly had his sacrifice cost him. Sometimes I could not bring myself to believe that I looked upon the hero of Barren Hill or stood so near to a man who had been named the saviour of France. Ragged, woebegone, silent—it was the old Lafayette none the less. And even his presence whispered the word "courage" to me.

God knows I needed such a word as that. Had it been otherwise the torment of those sunless days, the blackness of those waking nights, would have robbed me of all reason. What thoughts of the world without came to me; what hopes and fears, what terrible imaginings! My beloved wife—how was it with her? Had Le Brun saved her in that great hour as he had twice saved before? Was old Gervais of Blois near by her? What had Georges of Bayonne done for one he worshipped? The black silence answered me; or the patter of the rats running across my prone body. My gaolers might have been men of stone. They spoke to me but thrice in the five months of my imprisonment. The first command that I received from them bade me go out into the courtyard to see some soldiers flogged.

I am at a loss even to this day to tell you what

purpose this cruel exhibition served, or what lesson our captors desired it to teach. M. de Lafayette, I learned afterward, was carried to the courtyard, as I had been, thrice in a month to see men stripped to the waist and beaten with whips so heavy and leaded that many died under their lashes. On such a day as this I first saw the sun after many weeks. When next they led me out it was to be told by the Governor of Magdebourg himself that certain of my friends had been conspiring to bring about M. de Lafayette's freedom and my own.

"Let me hear of your tampering with any one, writing any letter, or failing to obey any regulation, and I will have you shot upon the instant," said he.

I could only reply that a man interned five feet below the soil, in a cell as black as night, might as well hope to climb a mountain as to have converse with his friends.

"Sir," I said, "the severity with which you treat me will some day serve you ill. I am an American citizen, and have never lifted a hand against your countrymen in all my life. But I am a man, as you are; and could you but tell me what has befallen my beloved wife in France, then, indeed, would I forget the wrongs that have been done me in this place."

I do not know what led me to unburden myself to this man, or what I hoped from his sympathy. Martinet as I found him, a German soldier and typical of his people, some kindliness in the glance he turned

upon me led me to the confession. Nor did his uncouth reply discourage me. I left him believing that he would not be found without goodwill toward me. The days to come proved that I was not mistaken.

"Your affairs can be nothing to me," he said sharply; "see to it that I have no cause of complaint. Your treatment may depend upon your behaviour. I can promise nothing whatever."

Here was little enough to go upon if you will, and yet my persistency remained. "This man has loved some woman," I said; "my story goes to his heart." What I hoped of it, I cannot tell you. I believed that I had made a friend; and in that faith was returning to my prison, when, for a brief instant, I found myself alone by the grating of General Lafayette's cell, and, speaking in a whisper, I called him to the bars.

"Old comrade, it is I—Zaida. Let me touch your hand. Say that it is well with you."

I thrust my hand between the bars and pressed both his own. Looking thus closely at him, that which astonished me chiefly was the little change I found in him. Neither the humiliation of his situation nor the rigour of his punishment had abated his courage or wounded his health. Here was the General Lafayette of Barren Hill, brave and alert and kindly as of yore—the man who had fought the Red-Caps in Paris and believed that he would fight them yet again.

"How should it be ill with me while you are near?"

he said; "what has a man to complain of when his friends are with him? Have I not brought this upon you, Zaida? You suffer for my sake, old comrade; but you shall share the joy with me. Say first that you forgive me, and all the rest will be easy."

I answered him, in truth, that none but children would waste the precious moments speaking of forgiveness between two friends who would lay down their lives each for the other; a rejoinder he scarcely heeded, I think, for, drawing me closer to the bars and speaking into my very ear, he then opened his vest not more than a thumb's breadth and showed me a paper that lay concealed therein.

"Our friends are not idle," he said; "this is to say that General Washington himself has written to Vienna and to Potsdam. Madame, my wife, paid heavily that it should be brought to me. We are to go to Holland and thence to America, if the petition be answered favourably. Failing that, there are other ways. Your old comrade, Le Brun——"

He pressed his face to the very bars, so intent was he to speak of this thing, and I could see how the story excited him. But it was not to be. Whatever story of Le Brun he had to tell me must remain that day untold. A step upon the flags of the corridor warned us both that our gaolers had returned, and, with a warm clasp of my hand, he drew back into the shadows. Judge, however, in what a state of hope and expectancy I returned to my cell. Freedom!

Could a whisper of a promise, then, so quicken a man's pulse and stir his blood? Liberty—did God in His good providence design that I should go free to find my little wife waiting for me beyond the gates? In my new exaltation I declared it to be so. There is but a narrow gulf between joy and sorrow in a prison cell. Who will blame me if I crossed it in my dreams that night, and, clasping my beloved in my arms, wept lonely tears because the morrow would give her back to me?

## CHAPTER XXXII

### I HEAR OF MY WIFE

I was already free in my imagination, abroad upon a good horse or walking the decks of the great ship which should carry me to America. Ah, fate ironical, what a prisoner's dream was that! For three long months after I had spoken to M. de Lafayette I saw none but the faces of my gaolers—and no man spoke a word to me. Even my dear friend no longer stood at the bars of his cell to bid me take courage. They had taken him to another place in the fortress, and I remained utterly alone.

Three months of darkness—day but a ray of wan light upon the stones; night but weary hours of dreams and longing. Sometimes the spirit of my hope fled afar and left me with nothing but the desire of death.

All prisoners, it may be, have suffered such hours as these. I will pass them by to speak of a day, when no longer blind to my condition, one of the warders bade me follow him to the Governor's room, and I came face to face with that man of iron for the second time—the last I was to see him in all my life. The room to which they led me opened out upon the ramparts of the prison, beneath which both General Lafayette and myself had been confined.

A full half-hour must have passed before the Governor came to me; and when he entered I did not hear his step, so intent was I upon that panorama of the river and the fields. When he touched me upon the shoulder I perceived that he had not come alone; for a servant attended him with a flask of wine and some fruit upon a dish, and his first act was to pour me out a brimming glass and bid me drink it. "But have a care," said he, "for that is a Rhine wine which goes quickly to the head." The servant being withdrawn, the Governor bade me sit at the table and spoke at once of the business upon which he had summoned me.

"You have good friends in Paris," said he. "I make sure you could name them to me if I put you to the point."

"Sir," said I, "a man's best friend is the woman who loves him—but I do not forget the others. You are speaking, perchance, of Gaspard Le Brun, or that fine old soldier, Gervais of Blois? Can you convey a word from me to them——?"

He raised his hand to cut me short.

"I speak of none of those. You are an American, and should look first to America. Can you think of none who would befriend you there?"

"Of so many," said I, "that a book would scarce hold their names. I will even dare to name General Washington among the number.

He smiled a little drily.

"Your friend has nothing of the soldier in him, I

understand. They speak of him as a droll who has made Paris laugh when she had the leisure to become human. Perhaps you do not know such a man."

"Sir," said I, "you would not be thinking of a lean Quaker they call Gad Grimshaw? Is it indeed he?"

"No other. If friendship be obstinacy, this fellow is your very Jonathan. Why, sir, my Government would pay a thousand crowns to the man who would rid them of this pestilent fellow."

I suppose that my face showed him the pleasure with which I heard his news. Old Gad Grimshaw, of Philadelphia!—that he should be the only one to act for me in prison. Incredible it appeared. And what, then, had become of Le Brun, of Gervais, and Georges? What had become of them? Was it that they were the sentinels of my little wife's safety, and so close pressed that the hazard of their own fortunes was no less than my own. I concluded that it must be so.

"There is little harm in Gad Grimshaw while you lock up the windows," said I. "If it be possible to tell him of my gratitude, I shall be under some obligation if you will do so. My anxieties lie elsewhere, and you, sir, will not think ill of me for that. My dear wife is but a child still. I can ill bear tidings of my friends when none of her reach me."

I had always believed this Governor to be a true man at heart, and I did not change my opinion of him

while I made this confession. Eyes blue as an English lad's were turned upon me when he replied; and if he avoided my question, I perceived none the less that he would have been willing to answer it.

"Mr. Kay," said he, "men speak of Paris nowadays with bated breath. Since Frenchmen murdered their King——"

I looked at him in amazement.

"Is the King dead?" I asked him.

"As long ago as January last. Here you have the first-fruits of the Marquis de Lafayette's teaching. They bring their King to the block, fill the prisons to the very gates, treat their Queen with infamy, walk in streets that run red with blood, and tell the world that this is liberty and fraternity. Those of us who have friends in Paris must call upon all our courage when we hear of these things. It would be thrice foolish to hope that the hazard of good fortune will pick us out when so many must suffer. You are a soldier and will bear with fortune, however she may treat you. Should madame, your wife, fortunately be released——"

"Sir," cried I, "you did not tell me that she was in prison."

"Mr. Kay," he said, laying a kindly hand upon my own, "I last heard of her in the Abbey prison five weeks ago."

I bowed my head upon my arm and for many minutes did not speak to him again. In his turn he

poured me out a second glass of the wine and bade me drink it. As one in a mist of dreams I perceived him walking to and fro the length of that great room and heard him telling me of Paris and the horrible crimes which stood to her charge. Yet what were these to me? My beloved a prisoner! Alone, I made sure, amid the demons this revolution had unchained. "Heaven help and pity her," I said. And I was a prisoner helpless as she.

"Is there any news of one named Le Brun?" I asked him presently, fearing almost the sound of my own voice.

"Le Brun is dead," he said, laying his hand upon mine again. "He died when madame was arrested."

"Then he died to save her," I cried, and asked him in the same breath if he had any tidings of old Gervais of Blois.

"They speak of him at Sedan, and afterward across the frontier. Is a certain Armand de Sevigny known to you?"

"Too well," said I, "for by him has this sorrow come to us."

"Your friend Gervais hunts him like a dog, they tell me."

"Heaven help him when he be caught. Sir, I can speak no more of this. The sunlight blinds my eyes. Let me go again. The darkness is fitter for me than the light to-day."

He helped me to rise, for a great weakness had come upon me.

"Heed not my words overmuch," he said; "they may yet spare the women—and I know nothing they can rightly charge against madame, your wife. In a day or two there may be better news of her. Go to the room I have commanded them to prepare for you. My garden is open to you whenever you may choose to walk in it."

"Sir," I said, "you find me grateful, but it is nothing to me now. Let them give me liberty, and a horse to carry me to Paris, and you shall see no happier man in Germany."

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE CROSS IN THE WOOD

My treatment in the prison changed entirely from this moment; nor did any severity now attend it. If I have learned since that the protests of the American Government were in the main responsible for this, I shall give my friend the Governor some credit nevertheless. The room I now ocupied was high up in the citadel which divides the river Elbe in twain. I had the sweet, clear waters of the river beneath both my windows, the great town of Magdebourg for my solace, and the Governor's garden on the far bank open to me whenever I had the mind to row across to it.

I say that the severity of my treatment abated suddenly; but in these privileges I stood alone. My dear friend Lafayette had already been removed from Magdebourg; Lameth was released; De Pusy and Maubourg had gone I knew not whither. A solitary captive of the fortress, I walked the ramparts alone or spent the weary hours in the groves of the Governor's garden. Some days being passed, they even permitted me to go abroad upon the Northern road and to visit a little inn upon the river's bank, to which many in Magdebourg resorted at holiday times. Ac-

companied in these excursions by an honest soldier, a thought of escape never entered my head. Perhaps I had lost my courage; I cannot tell you, for the memory of those hours lies bitterly upon me.

Now, I think it would have been the Wednesday of the third week after the Governor had told me of Paris and my dear wife's imprisonment that a new favour awakened me to some interest and seemed to speak of friends who had not forgotten me. Expressing my desire to walk out to the inn I have spoken of, I was exceedingly surprised when I had crossed the river to find two horses ready saddled for us, and one of them my own good horse which had brought me out of France. In answer to my remark that this was a kindness I would personally thank the Governor for, the old soldier, by name Albert Berghaus, bade me lose no time in doing so; "for," said he, "the nights draw in, master, and the sun is good enough for us."

Had I been more observant the man's tone might have struck me as somewhat curious. But I thought little of my own condition in those days and much of others; and, mounting without remark, I rode out toward the inn and never doubted that Albert was at my heels. Judge of my astonishment when, halting at the tavern door, I discovered that I was quite alone.

The man had lagged, then! The road was wide enough surely, that I should see him if he rode upon

it. Or had I been so preoccupied that he had cantered on ahead of me and was already in the house? Bawling "Albert! Albert!" with all my lungs, a little girl came running out of the inn and said that Albert Berghaus had not been there since the Sunday. This astonished me more than anything which had happened since I entered Prussia.

Had the fellow fallen ill, then? Should I return and seek him? A voice whispered, "Fool, this is the day of your liberty." At first a still, small voice, anon it became a great shouting in my ears of "Liberty, liberty, France, the prison wherein Pauline lies!" Again I looked down the flat, dusty road. Not a soul appeared thereon. And now the voice became louder, more insistent every instant. I touched my good horse with the spur and set him trotting upon the high road; I caught him with the rein and the trot became a canter; my whip was raised—he began to gallop. Ah, what an hour to live through! The winding high road; the voice impelling me; Pauline's eyes calling me to her prison; the fear of pursuit; the hunter's ear listening as I drew rein for hoofs upon the road behind me. And then the mad resolution. France or death! Liberty or a grave within the citadel.

I rode for a full hour at all the speed with which a brave horse is capable. When I drew rein for very fear that he would die I had left the river Elbe far behind me, and come to a little wood of pines in so

"THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT FOUND ME STILL AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS"

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desolate a place that it might have been the end of the earth—a very abode of spirits and the dwelling-place of solitude. Observing that a man might well lie concealed in the thickets round about, I led my horse into the wood and there came upon a little shrine with a figure of Christ upon the Cross and a spring of clear, fresh water beneath it. Here I determined to rest some hours and to go no farther until darkness should cover me; and to this end I unsaddled the poor brute and let him graze where he would.

Now, it was in this act of kindness to my good horse that I made an odd discovery which in my haste I had overlooked.

The holsters upon the saddle I perceived were far from being empty; and not they alone, but the haversack slung across them did not contain oats, as it might have done. Unbuckling the straps with some eagerness I brought out a great flask of brandy from one of the holsters; a shapely pistol from the other. The haversack itself gave me bread and meat, as welcome as their provision was astonishing.

"This Governor, then," said I, "was in some hurry to get rid of me. Either he will give it out that I escaped, or he has received orders to release me."

The latter supposition I could not accept; and, indeed, as I discovered afterwards, the good fellow took it upon his own shoulders to release me, believing that his Government attached little importance to my

detention. This I learned later on. At the moment I had nothing but gratitude for his consideration; and, falling to with a hungry man's appetite, I made a hearty meal, and was ready once more to think upon my journey. No longer now could the high road be dangerous to me. Indeed, my heart was light enough as I began to make ready; and this was my occupation when a little strip of paper fluttered from one of the holsters to the ground, and lay so white upon the green grass that it seemed to reproach me for my long neglect of it.

I buckled the holster up, I say, and whistling my good horse to me, I put the saddle upon his back and made the girth secure. Caring little for that which the Governor had written, I was ready to mount again before I took the paper up and turned it about with indifferent fingers. Judge you what reason I had delayed.

"Let your road carry you to Hamburg," the paper said; "it is necessary that you know the truth. Your wife died upon the scaffold in Paris thirty days ago."

I did not read the paper twice. The darkness of the night found me still at the foot of the Cross, with the image of the Saviour looking down upon me.

And in the darkness I heard the sweet music of a voice saying, "It is well with me, beloved; sleep, for she whom thou hast loved will watch upon thy dreams."

# AN EDITOR'S FOOTNOTE

THE story of Zaida Kay, as he himself has told it, ends in this place. There can be little doubt that the death of Pauline, the Count of Beauvallet's daughter, upon the scaffold in Paris contributed in some part to her husband's liberty. Though he has not written the story, we hear of him returning to France and braving the worst perils of the Revolution in an effort to accuse the judges who had sent this brave girl to her death. Not content with this, he appears to have devoted both his energies and his fortune to secure the release of his old friend the Marquis de Lafayette, still a prisoner in the Austrian fortress of Olmütz.

This great attempt, as all the world now knows, ended in ignominious failure. The German doctor, Bollman, helped by the young American, Francis Kinlock Huger, the son of that very Huger at whose house the Marquis rested the first night he arrived in America, together contrived to write a letter in invisible ink and to introduce it into Lafayette's cell at Olmütz. "These few words," they wrote to him, "*when read with your usual warmth* will afford to a heart like yours some consolation." The Marquis

had the wit to perceive the meaning and held the note to the flame of a candle. Thereon he read of the attempt which was being made to rescue him; and, being asked if he could indicate a favourable moment, replied with ink of lime juice that an occasional drive would be the only opportunity.

Who bungled this favourable scheme it is a little difficult to say. Certainly Bollman and Huger brought horses to the vicinity of the fortress and there met M. de Lafayette. A fierce fight between young Huger and the guard resulted in the latter's discomfiture; but General Lafayette, leaping upon the horse awaiting him, took the road to Jagersdorf instead of that to Hoff and was there rearrested by Prussian officers before a week had passed. It remained for the victorious General Bonaparte, then in the very vigour of his first successes, to demand imperiously, in the year 1797, that which Austria had so long refused. General Lafayette was released at Napoleon's bidding and went, an exile still, to live secluded years in Holland.

There is no further record of any meeting between that honest soldier, Zaida Kay, and the great Frenchman by whom so many misfortunes came both to France and to his friends. Zaida, indeed, was in America at the time M. de Lafayette received his liberty. I have a letter dated from the house of his old friend Gad Grimshaw, of Philadelphia (now a widower), in which he speaks of the healing virtues

of time and the sweet companionship of one who long had loved him.

And I am tempted to wonder if this were not the flaxen-haired Honor Grimshaw, constant still in womanhood and happy in that abiding faith of love which the years might yet justify.

THE END

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